SRIMATI C. SARASWATI BAI'S

COMMEMORATION VOLUME

ISSUED

ON THE OCCASION OF

THE UNVEILING OF HER PORTRAIT

AT

THE JAGANNATHA BHAKTA SABHA, EGMORE

ON SATURDAY THE 16th DECEMBER 1939

EDITOR [illegible]

E. 892.

"सरस्वती श्रुतिमहिता महीयताम्" ।

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EDITOR:—SRI. M. S. RAMASWAMI AIYAR, B.A., B.L., L.T.

892

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Srimati C. Saraswati Bai's

TITLES.

Year	No.	TITLES	By whom given
1916	1	Gayana Patu	Bombay Gandharva Maha-Vidyalaya represented by Pandit Vishun Digambar.
1920	2	Kirtana Patu	The Poona Public represented by Lokamanya B. G. Tilak.
1936	3	Sangita Samskrita Vidyaratna	Kasi Pandit Sabha.
	4	H.P.M.D. (Harikatha Prasanga Marga Darsini)	The Indian Fine Arts Society, Madras.
	5	Kirtana Kantirava	The Calcutta Public.
1937	6	Sangita Manishini	Ayodhya Samskrita Vidyamandir.
1938	7	Sangita Ratna	Bharat Dharma Mahamandal
1939	8	Samskrita Bhasha Visarada	Ayodhya Samskrita Vidyamandir
	9	Abhinava Saraswati	The Public of Madras and Kumbakonam by Mahamahopadhyaya R. V. Krishnamacharya.

WELCOME SONG

Composed by Sri. Mannargudi Sambasiva Iyer, Musician

TO

Srimati C. Saraswati Bai

கண்ணிகள்.

1.	சீர்மிகு சென்	னைத் திருவல்	லிக்கேணி	தலத்தில்
	பேர்மிகு மோர்	மாத்துவப்பி	ராம்மண நற்	குலத்தில்
2.	மகிமைபெறு	இராமனெனு	மறையவற்கு	மகளாய்
	மகிபுகழத்	தோன்றியநம்	மாது கலை	மகளாய்
3.	சரசுவதி	பாயென்னத்	தகும் பேரும்	பெற்றே
	பரசுகலை	பலவு மிசைக்	கலையுமிகக்	கற்றே
4.	குருவாகும்	க்ருஷ்ணனுமே	கொண்டாடக்	கீர்த்தி
	பொருவாக	இமயமுதல்	குமரிவரை	போர்த்தி
5.	மன்னும் பல	மன்னவரும்	மாண் பெரியார்	தகவே
	உன்னியளித்	திடும்பரிசும்	உறு விருதும்	மிகவே
6.	புலவரொடு	பாமரரும்	பொற்றவுயர்	கீதம்
	பலமிகு சற்	கதைகள் பல	பாங்குடன் செய்	நீதம்
7.	திலகமதாய்	திலகருநல்	திகம்பரருங்	கற்றோர்
	பலருந் தரு	பேர் பலவும்	பார்மீதி	லுற்றோர்
8.	அபினவச	ரஸ்வதியாம்	அரிய பெரும்	பட்டம்
	அபிமான	முடனளிக்க	அறிஞருற்றோர்	திட்டம்
9.	ஆறைந்து	வருடமதாய்	அரிகதை செய்	துறையில்
	பேரெங்கும்	நிலை நாட்டி	விளங்குகின்றோர்	தரையில்
10.	அரிகதையை	அரிய இந்த	அணங்கினிடம்	கேட்டு
	மறுகதையை	மதிப்பாரோ	மனமதிலே	வேட்டு
11.	நாரியருள்	நாயகமாம்	இவர் புகழை	யாமே
	பாரித்துப்	பல்கினவை	யாவுஞ்சிறி	தாமே
12.	நாதமய	மான ஜகந்	நாத னெனும்	தேவே
	ஆதரமாய்	இவர்க்கருள் நல்	ஆயுளோடு	வாழ்வே.

A SONNET

BY

DEWAN BAHADUR
SRI K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI, B.A., B.L.
(Retd. Dt. and Sessions Judge)

To lift the heart unto the Throne of Grace
On soaring wings of shining song and speech
Is Krishna's peerless gift to thee—to teach
The art of godly thoughts and godly ways
Amidst the hurry of these selfish days;
And unto Man, God's message high to preach
So that he might by ceaseless striving reach
The peaks alit with Love's eternal blaze.
Thy early strivings in the path of fame
Were thwarted oft but yet persevering still
You kept aloft the flag of godly art.
In the song's ageless and undying flame
Doth burn enkindled by dedicated will
And warms the cold unfeeling human heart.

Northern Indian Tributes

श्रीश्रीगौरकृष्णः शरणम् ।

आशीरभिनन्दनम् ।

1\. श्रीमन्माध्वसम्प्रदायाचार्य्य–दार्शनिकसार्वभौम–सर्वतन्त्र-
स्वतन्त्र–ज्यौतिषभूषण–साहित्यदर्शनाद्याचार्य–तर्करत्न-
न्यायरत्न-गोस्वामिदामोदरशास्त्री ।

मद्रासमहानगरनिवासिन्या : कर्णाटभूसुरवंशमुक्तामणेः श्रीमत्या गानकलाऽभिज्ञाया : संस्कृतभाषायामधीतिन्याः श्रीसरस्वतोबाईदेव्या द्रविडगीःसध्रीचीनसुरभारतीबहुलं श्रीजानकीविवाह सम्बद्धं मुरजघनततसन्ततसन्तन्यमानं श्रीभगवल्लीलासङ्कीर्त्तनमधिकाशि हनुमद्घट्टोपकण्ठं शोभमाने शुकदेवमठे त्रिनवत्युत्तरैकोनविंशतिशततमवैक्रमाब्दकार्त्तिककरकचतुर्थ्यां प्रदोषे काशिकपण्डितसभासभास्तारैरुद्योजितायां बंहिष्ठविज्ञभावुकनागरिकेभ्यदर्शकवृन्दभूषितायां सभायां परभृतकण्ठगर्वसर्वंकषमधुरिमधुरोणेदमीयकण्ठादुज्जिहानमाकर्ण्योक्तसभया प्रतिनिधीकृतस्य मे करात् वितीर्णेन "सङ्गीतसंस्कृतविद्यारत्नो" पाधिपत्रेणाद्दताऽपीयं नूनमाशिषाऽप्यादरणीयेति कर्णीबुभूषाकलहायमाननिजकरणनिकुरुम्बाकुलितोऽपि गानासेचनकत्वसमाहितमनस्कोऽवाप्तसम्मदातिरेकमन्तरमान्तमिव कतिपयवर्णमिषेणैनं प्रचिकाशयिषु रेतदीयविनयसौजन्यसारल्यप्रमुखसद्गुणगरिमप्रसाद्यमानमानस : श्रीजगदीश्वरादन्वहमेधमानामदसीयालङ्कर्मीणतामनिशमर्थयमानः सौख्यसनाथदीर्घजीवनसब्रह्मचारिणीयं भवतादित्याशिषैनामभिनन्दयति ।

इति शम् ।

वाराणस्यां ४-११-१९३६. दामोदरगोस्वामी

2\. पण्डितप्रवर श्रीसरस्वतीदेवी पूर्वेद्यू रविवासरे सीतविवाहमुपलक्ष्य कथोपकथनेन सर्वेषामेव नितरा मानन्दमुत्पादयामास ।

अस्यां प्रतिश्लोकं तत्तद्भावानां प्रकाशनेऽन्यादृशीशक्तिर्वर्तते । दशरथ - वसिष्ट - विश्वामित्र-राम लक्ष्मण - ताटका - मारीच - गौतम - इन्द्र - अहल्या - जनक - तन्मन्त्रि -श्री जानकी- तत्स ख्यादीनां तत्तदव सर विशेषेषु, करुण - वीर - श्रृङ्गार - भक्त्यादि रसानां तत्तत्तादाम्यमवलंब्यैकयैवानया, अचिरेणैव बहु भावावलंबनेन, शरीरवाङ्मनसां त्रयाणांव्यापारेष्वन्यादृशंनैपुण्यंप्रदर्शितं । येन भाषाऽनभिज्ञा अपि समयोचित भावरसविज्ञानेन घटिकाचतुष्टयमपि तदीयवाक्यरसानुभवैकदत्तचित्ताआसन् । सङ्गीतनैपुण्यन्त्वस्या अनितरसाधारणं प्राचीनसङ्गीतविदुषा मिवाधुनिकसङ्गीताभिज्ञानामपि श्लाघनीयमेवासीत् । यथासमयं हास्यरसोत्पादनेन, निर्भीकमेव समयोचितरामायणादिगतपद्यानां पण्डित सदस्यपि सम्यग्व्याख्यानेन, सर्वेषां भावानां समयोचितानां हावभावादीनां चाभिनयमात्रेण सुतरामभिव्यञ्जनेनच, विरलविरला एतादृशाः कथककथां कथयितारः । विश्वसिमः यन्न केवलं कथकथोपकथनेन, किन्तु केवलसङ्गीतप्रसङ्गेनापि लोकप्रसिद्धेयं नितरामानन्दयिष्यतिश्रोतृवृन्दं । पाण्डित्यंचास्याः असाधारणं सङ्गीतालापनादौ कथककथोपकथने चैकरूपरूपमेवास्माभिर्मन्यते । इत्युभाभ्यामिवैकैकेनापिसेयंसरस्वतीदेवीतिप्रसिद्धाश्रवणीयैव । सर्वथैनामवत्वीशः ॥ इति शं ॥

महामहोपाध्याय अनन्तकृष्णशास्त्री, कल्कत्ता

3. अयि साहित्यसङ्गीतमहार्णवा विद्वद्वर्याः ! संप्रति मौनदिवसोममेति वक्तुमशक्तवन्नपि- " वाग्जन्मवैफल्यमसह्यशल्यं गुणाद्भुतेवस्तुनि मौनिताचेत् । खलत्वमल्पीयसिजल्पितेतु तदस्तुवन्दीभ्रमभूमितैव " इति श्रीहर्षोक्तेः प्रथमप्रोक्तदोषमसहमानोऽहं लिखित्वैव किञ्चिदुपहरामि साहित्यसङ्गीतसरस्वत्यै अस्यैमहाविदुष्यै ।

यद्यपि श्रीहर्षोक्ते स्तृतीयपादोक्तः " खलत्वमल्पीयसिजल्पितेतु " इत्यल्पजल्पनदोषस्त्वा पतत्येव । तथापि महाविदुषीयमधुनाऽस्मांकं मौनपारवश्यंविमृश्यावश्यं " पत्रंपुष्पंफलंतोयं योमेभक्त्या- प्रयच्छति " इति श्रीमद्भगवदनुशासनात् अकिञ्चित्करमपीमंवाक्यकुसुमस्तोमं स्वीकरिष्यत्येवेति महतीममाशा ।

विद्वत्तमा महानुभावाः ! साहित्यसङ्गीतसरस्वत्या अस्या महाविदुष्याः वारत्रय मस्माभिस्सङ्गीत- मधुरिमा श्रवणातिथि मानीतोऽस्ति । प्रथमतः श्रीभारत मातृमण्डलो द्घाटनावसरे । द्वितीयस्तु संस्कृत साहित्यसमाजे । तृतीयोऽयमवसरस्समुपस्थितो । यत्रेहश्रीमतामपिसमागमः । उत्तरोत्तरमिहविषये " पदेपदेयन्नवतामुपैति तदेवरूपंरमणीयतायाः " इत्युक्तिश्चारितार्थ्यमेति । किंबहुना, नेयंदेवीसङ्गीत कलाभिज्ञैव । अपितु संस्कृतसाहित्यवाङ्मयमाधुर्यरसज्ञेतिच महदिदंप्रमोदास्पदमस्माकं । संस्कृत साहित्यसङ्गीतसरस्वतीमिमां देवींविलोक्य संप्रतिप्राचीन भारतीयाः आर्यमहिळाः वाग्देवतामप्युपहसन्तिस्म । यथैकया तदानीन्तनया संस्कृतसाहित्यसङ्गीतधुरीणया एतादृश्यैव महाविदुष्या अभिहितंविद्यते । " नीलोत्पल- दळश्यामां विज्जकांमामजानता । वृथैवदण्डिनाप्रोक्तं सर्वशुक्ला सरस्वती " ति

अस्तु संप्रतिसङ्गीतसाहित्यसरस्वत्याअस्यावाङ्मयमधुरिम्णा, स ङ्गी त क ल या संस्कृतसाहित्य वैदुष्येणच विमुग्धमना अहं नकिञ्चिदधिकमभिधातुमर्हामीति श्रीहर्षोक्तपद्यस्थतृतीयचरणोक्तदोषमप्यात्मन्यास ञ्जयन्नेव विरमामि विस्तरात् । इति शं ॥

दर्शनकेसरी गोपालशास्त्री
प्रधानमन्त्री
संस्कृतसाहित्यसमाज, काशी

श्रीकाशी-विश्वेश्वरो-विजयते ।

सुवर्णपुष्पां पृथिवीं चिन्वन्ति पुरुषास्त्रयः ॥
शूराश्च कृतविद्याश्च ये च जानन्ति सेवितुम् ॥

श्रीकाशी-पंडित-सभा

मानपत्रम् ।

श्रीमतीनां श्रीसरस्वतीबाईदेवीनां मद्रासमहानगरवास्तव्यानां विविधानवद्य-सङ्गीतविद्या-विद्योतितान्तः-करणानां वैदिकसनातन-धर्ममर्यादासंरक्षणविचक्षणानां तत्र भवतीनां श्रीमतीनां प्रौढ़गुणग्रामयशोविशेषसमृद्धां दिगन्तप्रसृतां सत्ख्यातिमनुसन्दधाना प्रमुदितमानसा "श्रीकाशीपण्डितसभा" सहृदयाभ्यः सुविनीताभ्यः सदाचारविभूषिताभ्यः श्रीमतीभ्यः "सङ्गीतसंस्कृतविद्यारत्नम्" इतिपदवीं वितरति—

श्रीकाशी-पण्डित-सभा-कार्यालयः
तिथिः ४·११·१९३६ (५-११-१९३६)
वैक्रमाब्दाः १९९३ कार्तिक-व-च काशी

सभापतिः श्री[illegible]
(महामहोपाध्यायः)
मन्त्री च श्रीगोपालशास्त्री
(दर्शनकेशरी)

ज्योतिष प्रकाश प्रेस, विश्वेश्वरगंज, बनारस सिटी । ११०७ 	६ पेजों धर्मं० ।

श्रीः

य: सुपर्णो यजुर्नाम छन्दोगात्रस्त्रिवृच्छिराः ।
रथन्तरं बृहत्साम तस्मै स्तोत्रात्मने नमः ॥

SHRI BHARATA DHARMA MAHAMANDAL HEAD OFFICE BENARES

संगीतविद्यामानपत्रम्

श्रीयुक्त श्रीमती सरस्वती बाई गायनपटु, कीर्तनपटु
C/o पण्डित कृष्णाचार्य ट्रीप्लीकेन
मद्रास

विद्यते तावदत्र परमपवित्रे भारते वर्षे संसारसागरपरपारैकसुहृदशेषशान्तिसुखनिदानस्य परमात्मसाक्षात्काररूपनिर्वाणसोपानस्य बाह्याऽभ्यन्तरीणशुद्धिकारणस्य शिष्टाऽनुष्ठितवर्णाऽऽश्रमाऽऽचारस्य सम्प्रति तत्त्वाऽननुशीलनकर्तव्योपेक्षणवितण्डादिदोषप्रच्छन्नज्ञानस्य सनातनधर्मस्य पुनः सम्यगभ्युदयाय सद्विद्याप्रचाराय साङ्गधर्मस्य पुनः प्रतिष्ठापनाय आर्यजातेः सर्वविधायाः श्रियस्समधिकवर्द्धनाय च नरपतिगणपरिपोषिता विद्वद्वृन्दनिषेविता निखिलसम्प्रदायाऽनुमोदिताऽन्तर्भावितदेशाऽन्तर्देशा निखिलधर्म्मसमितिप्रतिनिधिः श्रीभारतधर्म्ममहामण्डलाऽभिधाना श्रीमती महती समितिः ।

एषा खलु पुनर्वैदिककर्म्मणि लौकिकाऽलौकिकसिद्धिसाधनसामगीतिस्वरवशीकृतसुरनिकरस्य स्वविलासकलाऽऽलापवशीकृताऽऽनन्दमयपरमेश्वरस्य स्वर्गाऽपवर्गनिदानस्य निखिलजीवमनोमोहनस्य सङ्गीतशास्त्रस्य समुन्नतिं कामयते । अतः श्रीमन्तो भवन्तस्तथाविधसंगीतशास्त्रनैपुण्यादिभिरात्मगौरवं मन्यमाना गुणग्राहिणी धर्म्मसभेयं भवतीं गुणाऽनुरूपं संगीतरत्न इत्युपाध्यलङ्कारेणालंकृत्य परमानन्दसन्दोहमनुभवन्ती प्रार्थयते साऽनुरागं सर्वशक्तिमतो भगवतश्चरणाऽरविन्देषु समुन्नतिर्भवतां भूयादिति ।

श्रीकाशीधाम्नि
श्रीभारतधर्म्ममहामण्डलप्रधानकार्य्यालयः
५ तिथौ शुक्लपक्षे माघ मासे १८५८ वर्षे
बालकृष्ण मिश्र : BALA. Kavyatirtha
मन्त्री ।

आनरेबल सर महाराजाधिराज मिथिलाधिपति
के० सी० आई० ई० एल० एल० डी० डी० लिट् इत्युपाधिकः
प्रधानसभापतिः
श्रीभारतधर्म्ममहामण्डलस्य ।

हितचिन्तक प्रेस, रामघाट, बनारस सिटी ३२६८ b

"ABHINAVA SARASWATI"

Mahamahopadhyaya, Panditharaja, Abhinava Bhatta Bana, Sabda Tarkalankara Vidyabhushana, Vidvatkavi, Vatsya Chakravarthy **Sri. R. V. Krishnamacharya,** as representing the Pandits of Kumbakonam, conferred the title of **"Abhinava Saraswati"** on Srimati C. Saraswati Bai, on Saturday, December 16, 1939, in the premises of the Jagannatha Bhakta Sabha, Egmore, when her portrait was unveiled. The following Slokas were composed by him and duly read on the occasion.

॥ श्रीः ॥

॥ अभिनवसरस्वतीबिरुदेन अभिनन्दनम् ॥

श्रीकुम्भघोणनगरीतिलकायमानं वाणीविलास इतिमण्डपमस्ति रम्यम् । गीत्या च सच्चरितवर्णनया च यत्र सभ्योजनः सकुतुकं समयाकरोति ॥ १ ॥ तत्रैकदा सरसगानकलाप्रवीणैर्वीणादिवाद्यनिपुणैः कृतनृत्तविद्यैः । साहित्यसारनिगमागमतत्त्वधर्मसर्वस्वबोधरसिकैर्विबुधैरनेकैः ॥ २ ॥ धीकौशलेन गुणदोषविवेकशीलै राज्यधिकारपदवीं महतीं वहद्भिः । अन्यैरपि प्रभुवरैर्नगरप्रसिद्धैर्विद्याविनीतिमतिवैभवतः स्फुरद्भिः ॥ ३ ॥ आस्माकवर्गीयमुन्नमयिष्यतीति साध्वीमणीभिरधिभागवति प्रियाभिः । विद्योतिते रसमये महिते समाजे भक्त्याकथाप्रवचनश्रवणैकताने ॥ ४ ॥ श्रीरामदासचरितं सहगीतवाद्यसंशोभितैश्च सरसैश्च वचःप्रवाहैः । संवर्ण्य नागरमनांसि सरस्वतीय मानन्दविस्मयभरस्तिमितान्यतानीत् ॥ ५ ॥ किं कोकिला मधुरगीतिषु वाक्प्रपञ्चे किं भारती किमभिनीतिषु नृत्तविद्या । मेधाविनीयमिति सभ्यजनः समस्तः संशय्य निश्चयमवाप तथेति पश्चात् ॥ ६ ॥ गीर्वाणभाषामयपद्यपाठे तदर्थविस्तारविधौ सुबोधे । अवश्यवाच्योपकथानुबन्धेऽप्यन्यादृशं कौशलमेतदीयम् ॥ ७ ॥ गानेन च प्रवचनेन च देवभाषा ज्ञानेनचेयमपरानतिशय्य भाति । निष्कम्पना तदमृतह्रदमज्जनेन चित्रार्पितेव सकलापि सभा विभाति ॥ ८ ॥ बङ्गालपारसीकद्राविडकर्णाटकान्ध्रगीतेषु । वदति च पदानि सेयं तद्देश्यावत्सुखेन गायति च ॥ ९ ॥ नाम्ना सरस्वतीयं कलयाप्यभिनवसरस्वती भवति । इति रसिकविबुधगोष्ठी तदेव बिरुदं व्यधित्सदेतस्यै ॥ १० ॥ "तत्र संनिहितसभ्यनागरप्रातिनिध्यमवलम्ब्य संमतम् । दीयतामभिनवासरस्वतीत्युज्ज्वलं बिरुदमुत्तमं त्वया" ॥ ११ ॥ महामहोपाध्याय श्रीरामानुजमुखैर्बुधैः । श्रीपार्थसारथ्ययङ्गारादिभीरधिकारिभिः ॥ १२ ॥ अन्यैरपि च सौजन्यधन्यैर्गानविशारदैः । इति प्रेम्णाभ्यनुज्ञातो नवबाणो महाकविः ॥ १३ ॥ महामहोपाध्यायः श्रीकृष्णो बिरुदमुत्तमम् । दत्तेसरस्वतीदेव्यै सहमङ्गलयाशिषा ॥ १४ ॥

INTRODUCTION

BY

Sri. M. S. Ramaswami Aiyar, B.A., B.L., L.T.

THE Egmore *Jagannatha Bhakta Sabha* has had the unique privilege of honoring, in the space of two months, two eminent Ladies of South India—Srimati Dhanammal of *Vina* fame and Srimati C. Saraswati Bai of *Harikatha* fame. At the very outset of their careers, both the ladies had been obsessed with grave doubts regarding their future success. The one was faced with an ice-breaking problem of treading, for the first time, on the then *men-monopolised* ground; while the other was faced with another kind of problem, *viz*, whether Vina was after all a proper vehicle for adequately unfolding her inner self.

But God willed that both the gifted ladies *must* push on and reach their destinations. He therefore chose two of His representatives—Vynika Kalyanakrishnier of Trivandrum in the case of Dhanam and Sir. C. Sankara Nair in the case of Bai—to encourage the two doubters into shedding their misgivings and even show them the endless possibilities of their respective arts. The thus-encouraged ladies began to march on to the Temple of Fame, each (it so happened) at her eleventh year; and the very first performance, that each of them gave, proclaimed alike the future genius.

Their pure, classical, and magnetic music was alike—

> So soft though high, so loud and yet so clear,
> That even Angels lean'd from High to hear;

And when, at last, they *did*—as they were bound to—reach the Temple :—

> O! th' very God heard and bade His muse raise
> The golden trumpet of eternal praise.

Here the points of similarity between the two veterans stop. For, while Vina Dhanam confined all her attention, throughout her life, to music and music alone, Saraswati Bai evinced an entirely different bent of mind, as evidenced by her own admission in her *Autobiographical Sketch*, viz, "என்னை எவ்வளவோ விவேகிகள் பாட்டுக்கச்சேரி செய்யலாம் என்று தூண்டினார்கள். அது எனக்காவது, என் பெற்றோர்களுக்காவது, என் குருவுக்காவது ருசிக்கவில்லை."

In fact, Srimati Saraswati Bai left Vina Dhanam alone to live on her heritage of the purely music-field but herself progressed and conquered fresh fields and pastures new and finally played the role of a Bhagavatar.

Well did she do so; for, as I said in another place, judged as a teacher of morality, the position of a Bhagavatar, like that of the pulpit-orator, must ever stand acknowledged as the most important and effectual guard, support, and ornament of virtue's cause.

Cannot the same be said of music, pure and simple? Cannot music lead man directly to morality?

Much may be—and has indeed been—said on both the sides, of the question of *Music* vs. *Morality*, a brief consideration whereof is calculated to point to Bai's wisdom in respect of her choice of (Bhagavatar's) profession.

The orthodox people are never tired of proclaiming that music is the panacea for all the ills that flesh is heir to; that it is a shower-bath of the soul washing away all that is impure; that it is the be-all and end-all of life; that it is the only means for man to attain salvation; that it can breathe life even into a dead body (as Thiagaraja's music did); that it can cause a downpour of rain (as Dikshitar's music did); that it can convert the day into night (as Tansen's music did); that it can generate fire and consume the very singer (as Gopala Naik's music did); that it can force even the stars to shoot madly from their spheres (as Shakespeare said); and that it is the sole cause for the very formation of this world (as Dryden sang).

The opponents, on the other hand, wax no less eloquent and appear to be no less strong, inasmuch as they present to us, not the puranic aspect of music, but its historical and constitutional aspects. They further derive their strength from such stalwart writers as Rousseau, Smiles, Haweis, Gurney, Ascham; and even from Valmiki aud Kalidas, and again from Tagore as well.

The question—*Can music lead man to morality*?—was, so far as Europe was concerned, answered so early as the 16th Century by Roger Ascham in a suggestive and alliterative sentence, *viz*, "Much music mars men's manners."

Next, in the middle of the 18th Century, the Academy of Dijon, in France, formally raised the question, now under consideration, and offered a prize to any one who answered it. Jean Jacques Rousseau answered it and *got the prize*. He surveyed mankind from China to Peru and took up for special consideration a few countries, such as, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Arabia, Turkey, and Sparta. He concluded that, on the introduction of slavery, the proud slave-owners confined themselves to fighting but abandoned all other human

activities to the slaves, to such an extent that every slave-owner would rather lose a pound of blood in a single combat than a drop of sweat in any honest labour; and that, *on the introduction of the Fine Arts*, even the military discipline was neglected and lo! the temple of virtue degenerated into a theatre of vice.

More than a century hence, Dr. Smiles confirmed Rousseau's view and observed: "Exquisite art and degrading corruption were contemporary in Greece as well as in Rome."

If Rousseau and Smiles showed us the historical aspect of the question, Rev. Haweis proceeded to tackle the question from a constitutional point of view. "Morality," observed Haweis, "is a quality which Art may or may not possess; it does not, except in a very secondary sense, belong to its constitution. In short, the morality depends on the artist, not on the art."

It seems therefore that music and morality are not inconsistent; but they fail to meet at the most crucial point, which is *Conduct*. In other words, good conduct cannot be acquired either by looking at a variety of clouds or by listening to a variety of sounds but by constant effort sustained from the cradle to the grave. Without a solid basis of individual goodness, all the grace, elegance, and art in the world would fail to save or elevate a people.

It is possible that a person of strong character may derive benefit from music. But is it equally possible for a person, versed only in music, to derive any benefit from morality?

I shall illustrate what I mean. Take the two cases of the very first King (Dilipa) and the very last King (Agnivarna), referred to by Kalidas in his *Raghuvamsa*. Both Dilipa and Agnivarna were music-lovers. For, the former felt delighted to hear, as he and his wife drove to Vasishta's hermitage, a peacock's cry which resembled the first note (Shadja) of the musical scale; while the latter was himself a pucca musician and drummer, as evidenced by the expression स स्वयं प्रहतपुष्कर: कृती. I therefore repeat that both Dilipa and Agnivarna had enough of music in them.

But did their possession of music involve that of morality? Listen to what Kalidas answered.

Independently of music, Dilipa was highly disciplined in morality—so much so that he looked like "the very *Kshatriya-virtue* incarnate on earth to do

its duty" (आत्मकर्मक्षमं देहं क्षात्रो धर्म इवाश्रितः). Hence, Dilipa's musical knowledge served to steady him in the path of morality to which he had been drawn by other independent means.

On the other hand, Agnivarna, who was versed only in music but who neglected to cultivate morality, naturally fell into obscene ways and so stupidly blinded himself as not to be able to see the difference between his own queens and maid-servants—with the result that he deservedly suffered from incurable consumption and that, when he died, his body was *secretly* thrown into the fire by his ministers.

Hence, I contend that, while it is possible for a person of strong character (like Dilipa) to derive benefit from music, it is next to impossible for a person, versed only in music (like Agnivarna), to derive any benefit from morality.

At this stage, I may state that two eminent persons—one of Europe and the other of India—Gurney and Valmiki suggested that music and morality are usualy separated from, if not opposed to, each other and that music, by itself, might not necessarily conduce to morality.

Gurney's position on the point may be summed up in his three telling statements:—

i. "Melania dotes upon the silliest things;
And, yet, Melania, like an Angel, sings."

ii. "Musical talent, being an isolated gift, may be possessed by the most ordinary people and is a sign of nothing beyond itself."

iii. Moral and Aesthetical excellences are not Siamese-Twins but Twin-sisters differently beautiful".

As for Valmiki, that hoary sage employed two antithetical epithets, while describing the twin-sons of Sri Rama thus:—कुशीलवौ चैव महातपस्विनौ। Govindaraja's Commentary on this line runs thus:—कुशीलवावपि महान्तौ तपस्विनौ। The *Commentary* may be translated thus:—"The twin-sons of Sri Rama were good musicians and *yet* highly disciplined persons".

Now, the word अपि in the Commentary or the word 'yet' in the translation speaks volumes for the *antithetical* nature of the two epithets.

It seems therefore that the relation between music and morality looks like the relation between Cricket Play and Shakespeare's Play. It seems to be hazardous to reconstruct a musician's life and personality from his artistic works alone. For, as Tagore says, a man's art comes, in the last resort from the subconscious part of his mind and does not therefore tell us very much about his conscious life. It is further a psychological truth that man tends to compensate in his subconscious life for tendencies that find no overt expression in his ordinary wide-awake behaviour ; and these tendencies it is that often appear in the works of art. Verily, therefore, did the Poet sing—

> Not always music shows the man ; we find
> Who sings kindness is not therefore kind.

Hence, by wisely adopting the Bhagavatar's profession, Srimati Saraswati Bai appeared to proclaim to the world that she had known the above-described functional difference between music and morality and virtually warned the public against a persistent habit of making a fetish of music, as though it were the only thing, instead of one thing, which man required in this world, and taught them a much-wanted lesson that it was no longer enough to know music alone well but it was also incumbent upon the people to understand its place among other sciences and arts and also its relation to the scheme of knowledge as a whole.

With consummate skill, therefore, Srimati Saraswati Bai forced the two partners of Kalakshepam, viz, *Music* and *Preaching* to come only as equals, neither one the drudge of the other and thus avoided the pitfall (into which almost all other Bhagavatars fell) of magnifying the one at the expense of the other. It is indeed a matter of gratification that, on this point, a lusty chorus of praise is found in this Volume.

It is contended that even the Bhagavatar's Kalakshepam (which Saraswati Bai wisely chose as her life-work) will, on close scrutiny, be found not to suffice as a system of ethical training. For, in order to develop moral force and stamina, the volitional nature must receive a more direct and a more powerful discipline than what comes from the chance suggestions of a Kalakshepam. Further, in all the ethical emotions, there is always the feeling of personal obligation to let the sentiment bear fruit in deed ; and this very "feeling of personal obligation," which is the quintessence of the moral feeling, is hardly present in aesthetical emotions.

The above contention seems to be based on the notion that whatever excites emotion but does not culminate in immediate action has a weakening and enervating effect upon character.

Is this *notion* always true ? No. It is true only under certain circumstances. If an appeal, for instance, to the emotion of raptly-listening audience, roused with a view to help the suffering neighbours, is not immediately followed by action ; or if a Commander's appeal, like that of Henry V on the eve of the battle of Agincourt, resulted only in the soldiers' beating their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks ; that roused-up emotion will surely have an enervating effect and drive the defaulters to the barren region of sentimentalism.

But, be it noted, to be affected by a drama, a novel, a poem, a song, or (for that matter) a Kalakshepam, which points to no immediate duty of action, need not enervate ; it only desciplines the emotion.

It is, by far, better to feel without action than to act without feeling.

In order, therefore, to successfully discipline the emotion of her audience, Srimati Saraswati Bai made it a point to equip herself with decent learning and practical experience and also to cultivate the habit of keeping her head cool but her heart warm, besides being—

Simple, grave, sincere ;
In doctrines uncorrupt ; in language plain ;
And plain in manners ; decent, solemn, chaste,
And natural in gesture : much impressed
Herself, as conscious of her awful charge
And anxious mainly that the flock she feeds
May feel it too.

It only remains for me to estimate Saraswati Bai's place in the story of Kalakshepam as well as to determine the nature of the services she had rendered to her country.

What was the condition of Kalakshepam prior to her time? What contributions did she make towards its development ?

To answer the first question, we need not go to any remote period of time but shall begin with just when the Maharata System of Kalakshepam reached Tanjore.

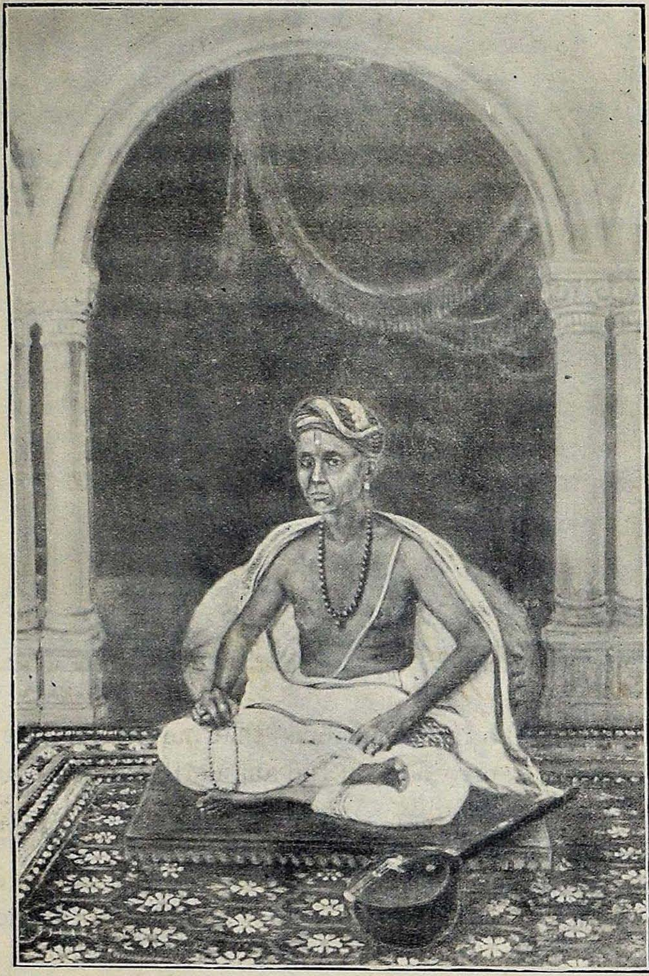
At Tanjore, the said Maharata System dashed itself against its formidable rival of the South Indian System of Kalakshepam and would have created a chaos but for the timely appearance of a remarkable performer of Kalakshepam, Sri Krishna Bhagavatar of Tanjore, who brought about, as it were, a

chemical combination of both the systems, that met at Tanjore, and produced a third and new system, deprived of all the angularities of its originals.

The various factors which contribute to the success of a modern Kalakshepam are peculiarly his. The *Introductory* songs to enliven the expectant audience; the *Dhrupad* or slow and long-drawn music to invest the

performance with an air of awe and solemmity ; the *Upakrama* or the text of the sermon to make known to the hearers the subject to be dealt with ; the telling narration of story, coupled with *lyrical* music, to illustrate the text chosen ; the witty sub-stories and lighter songs to afford variety ; and the *Upasamhara* or conclusion to draw a moral from the story and fit it in with the Upakrama—all these are today being faithfully followed in the same way as they were first handled by that great forerunner.

I suggested that Sri Krishna Bhagavatar found the music in recitative stage but used, in his Kalakshepam, the lyrical music. Wherefrom did he get the latter ? I answer without hesitation that he got the lyrical music from the fascinating *Kritis* of Thiagaraja.



Though his predecessors had been, as a class, conservative and had entertained a doubt whether it would be, after all, proper on their part to give up their time-honored recitative music for the new lyrical style, Sri Krishna Bhagavatar boldly introduced the innovation with the result that the Kalakshepam has been, since his time, rising into more and more popularity even amongst the classes, as opposed to the masses, for whose benefit it had been doubtless originally intended.

When once the principle of the lyrical music in the field of Kalakshepam was recognised, a mighty revolution set in.

The field of music came to be more and more deserted; and that of Kalakshepam, more and more over-crowded. Singers, whose musical talents were below the mark for a *pure and simple* musical performance but a little above the mark for the purpose of a Kalakshepam, imagined that they could please the classes with the lyrical music and the masses with their ordinary folklore.

This accounted for the rush, in the beginning of the present century, of indifferent musicians into the field of Kalakshepam and also for the idea that whoever despaired to succeed as a Sangita Vidwan could cut a figure, at least, as a Bhagavatar.

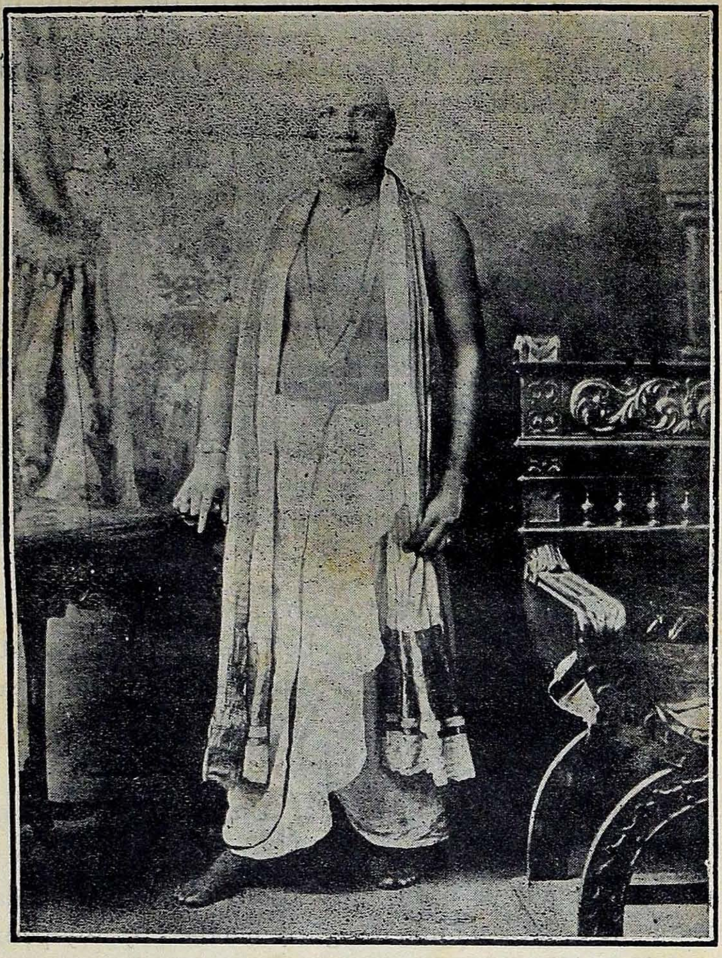
A parallel current happened to run, at the same time, by the influence of which the people, especially the so-called classes, became pathetically content with receiving good music as a sufficient compensation for bad preaching, instead of a brilliant ornament to good preaching.

The result was that the already over-crowded field of Kalakshepam became further overcrowded with all sorts of Bhagavatars and that the field of music became almost completely emptied.

O! what a craze had been created for the field of Kalakshepam, as though it were a light task that could be lightly handled by any person—Vasishta or Viran or even Van Allen!

When, finally, men and women, parrot-like, made bold to enter, on the strength of their music or personal qualifications, the field of Kalakshepam and posed as Bhagavatars; the already tottering edifice of Kalakshepam sustained a precipitous fall. To make the matter worse, the whole ruined field of Kalakshepam became pested with all sorts of undesirable elements, whose heads were stuffed with senseless farragos, which were further disgraced by the degraded spirit of witticism and punning.

The hungry sheep looked up but were not fed. At this crisis, there arose a powerful genius and an enthusiastic Bhagavatar of great probity and wit, viz, Sri Panchapakesa Sastri of Thiruppayanam. His words convinced every



head; his appeal moved every heart; and his effort, when directed against the chaos with which he was confronted, became the most powerful engine in subverting it. His genuine Sanskrit scholarship, coupled with his great experience, and indefatigable industry, enabled him to give up the beaten track and cut a new path by setting a new model of giving, on modern lines, a *series* of performances, called the "Ramayana Series," which he performed with classical purity and superior music. The later *Bharata Series* and *Bhagavata Series* were so many imitations of Sri Sastri's new model.

Compared with Sri Panchapakesa Sastri, Sri Krishna Bhagavatar was more brilliant but less profound and more musical but less learned. **Further**, Sri Krishna Bhagavatar tended more and more to lean on the *amusing* side of his performance. While, Sri Panchapakesa Sastri, with his energetic diction and expressive countenance, made the Kalakshepam a vehicle of *serious instruction*.

But that " serious instruction," it must be admitted, confined itself only to the Puranas and Ithihasas; and it did not soar high into the Vedantic region.

As if to supply this want, came forth into the field of Kalakshepam, the well-known Sri Lakshmanachar of BhagavadGita-fame, who was distinguished throughout for that sweetness of style, that nobleness of sentiment, that eleva-

tion, that unction, and that touching simplicity which are the characteristics of a good soul and of true genius. He had further a knack of drawing metaphors from easily understandable sources and frequently from the circumstances of the moment and of making the application generally happy. In short, with the help of good musicians (whose list iucluded amongst others the names of Maha Vythinathier, Patnam Subramanier, and later on, Anantarama Bhagavatar), he succeeded in elevating the institution of Kalakshepam into a high pedestal of serious discourse on spiritual questions, calculated to reclaim his audience from all earthly things.

Of the three essential attributes of Kalakshepam, viz., *interesting*, *instructive*, and *inspiring*, Sri Krishna Bhagavatar appropriated the first ; Sri Panchapakesa Sastri, the second ; and Sri Lakshmanachar, the third.

Exactly the same sentiments had been, three years ago, expressed by a Poet, while presenting an Address to Srimati C. Saraswati Bai, on behalf of the Indian Fine Arts Society, Madras, *viz* :—

> "Three Bhagavatars, in three ages born,
> Tanjore, Payanam, Iyar did adorn.
> The first, in point of *Interest*, surpass'd ;
> In *Instruction*, next ; *Inspiration*, last."

Stop here the Poet did not ; but he proceeded to estimate Bai's *place* in the story of Kalakshepam thus .—

> "The force of nature could nowhere else flee ;
> To make a fourth, she join'd all the three.
> Came, then, the very Saraswati down,
> Bless'd that *fourth* with success her Art to crown ;
> Naming her, like Self, SARASWATI BAI,
> She made her proudly learn'd, yet wisely coy."

Concur, in full, with the Poet's estimation I do ; for, verily *Srimati Saraswati Bai is all the above-mentioned three Bhagavatars rolled into one, with an additional advantage of belonging to the fair sex.* I say "additional advantage" ; for, in all history, women it was that had made brutes men, and men divine.

So far, we have seen the visible success at which our renowned Lady Bhagavatar arrived.

గాంధర్వకథాకుశలా ప్రథితానామ్నా సరస్వతీదేవీ ।
శ్రీ వేంకటేశకృపయా జీయాదాచంద్రతారకమవన్యామ్ ॥

Gayanapatu & Kirthanapatu

SRIMATHI C. SARASWATHI BAI.

But we are apt to forget the trial and suffering and peril through which it has been achieved. Well, therefore, did Dewan Bahadur Sri K. S. Ramaswami Sastri choose to remind us of them in a Sonnet, published in this Volume, viz :—

" Thy early strivings in the path of fame,
Were thwarted oft, but yet persevering still,
You kept aloft the flag of godly art."

But, reader, look at Bai's own *Autobiographical Sketch* and realise what sort of a flower-like girl was born, about forty years ago, at Gooty; what sort of chill penury repressed her noble rage and even threatened to waste her sweetness on the desert air; what sort of social slave-mentality she had to break through; what sort of supercilious world she had to defy; with what flying colors she emerged from out of her ordeal; and with what glory she turned the table against her persecutors by deservedly getting her *very first* recognition of merit at the hands of no less an authority than a well-acknowledged Prince of Violinists, Sri Govindaswami Pillai of Trichinopoly.

As some herbs need to be crushed to give forth their sweetest odour, so some natures need to be tried by suffering to evoke the excellence that is in them. Hence Bai's " early suffering " should be deemed to have been a matter of divine arrangement whereby—

What she learnt *in suffering*, she could teach *in song* ;
For, wretches are cradled into music by wrong.

Today, Srimati C. Saraswati Bai is hailed as a Star of the first magnitude in the firmament of Indian Music as well as a typical expounder of Kathas to a popular audience, having few equals and no superiors, at the present day—(pp. 28-29). Indeed. she is regarded as the *only Lady* in all India, who could rightly exhibit talents in both the schools of music, Carnatic aud Hindustani, in a most scientific manner—(p. 13), Her voice is somewhat intended for her alone; and it is a gift of heaven—(p. 32). Hence the rich and colourful melody of different tunes, that she sings with consummate ease and ability in her highly trained silvery voice, enthrals her audience and steeps them in balmy repose and tranquility—(p. 23).

She is further well-versed in a number of languages; and one cannot but admire the clear and flawless pronunciation of words in the different tongues. She has an unfailing knack of introducing apt anecdotes and timely wits in the course of her performance ; and this tends to make her kathas first-rate performances enjoyed by all (p. 49). Her knowledge of Sanskrit is a great asset to her in the popular exposition of the more abstruse philosophical and devotional parts of her discourse and her enunciation, if I may say so, is impeccable (p. 44). She is a magnificent speaker—(p. 62) and has indeed acquired a mastery of the style of narration of Harikathas (p. 42). The combination of qualities displayed by her is very rare (p. 28), so much so, that if you wish to point out the best at all of her qualities, no task more bewildering could be self-imposed ; for, you are sure to have set store by well-nigh everything, ere you are yourself aware of it (p. 19).

If she had been born in a western country, she would have been honoured as a Sarah Bernard or a Madame Melba ; or, if she had been born in the glorious days of ancient India, she would have adorned the Court of a Bhoja or of a Vikramaditya. In the present dependent condition of India's nationhood, reward of one's service can only be looked forward in the grateful recognition, love, and genuine appreciation of the public ; and Srimati Saraswati Bai has them in abundance...(p. 67). For, her present patrons include the Ruling Princes, Maharajas, Rajas, Millionaries, Pandits and even Pamaras.

This venerable Lady has, at last, vindicated the claims of her sex to undertake the onerous and arduous task of conducting religious discourses even to the members of the other sex and has incontrovertibly demonstrated that the task could be successfully aud satisfactorily carried out, if only sympathy, good will, and just appreciation are vouched—(p. 63).

As the result of her sacrifices and example, thousands of girls and women of the non-professional classes, Brahmins and Non-Brahmins, walk freely over the once forbidden ground and win laurels, with benefit to them and credit to the Indian art. Music, dance, drama, radio, gramaphone—all have drawn to them the best talents from highly aristocratic and respectable families down to the humblest cottages. *Srimati C. Saraswati Bai has achieved this miracle···(p. 67).*

Yet, one more miracle she achieved. As truly said in page 104 of this Volume, the South Indians do understand the Hindustani music and, therefore, admire and honor the North Indian *Ustads*; while, the North Indians do not (even care to) understand the Carnatic music and, therefore, leave the South Indian Vidwans unhonored and even unrecognised. It, however, fell to the happy lot of Srimati Saraswati Bai to turn the tide—so much so that a poet sang of her :—

> "In North, Southern Music lay hid in night;
> God order'd: "Let *Bai* sing!" and all was light."

That was why a North Indian music-critic, on hearing her sing, at Benares, on the occasion of opening the *Bharat-Mata-Mandir*, wrote in a Benares Journal "Aj", referred to in pp. 24-25 of this Volume :— " सभी झूमने लगे। सुननेवालों की आंखसे प्रेमाश्रुकी धार चल पडी। मैंने जीमें सोचा कि भगवानने उद्घाटन अवसरकी पूर्तिकेलिये ही इन्हें यहां भेज दिया है।

In fine, what Gargi and Maitreyi had been in the Sanskrit realm, what Auvai had been in the Tamil realm, what Srimati Mira Bai had been in the realm of North Indian Music,—that, Srimati C. Saraswati Bai has been in the realm not only of South Indian Music but also of North Indian Music and, still again, in the realm of Harikathas too.

It is therefore no wonder that all the professional musicians (pp. 32, 34 to 36, 43, 45, 50, 52 to 54, 56, 69, 71, 75)—why?—all the professional Bhagavatars (pp. 33, 70, 71) have magnanimously laid aside all reserve and ingenuosly paid off all their *tributes* of appreciation to this undisputed *Queen of Harikathas* of South India but of All India fame.

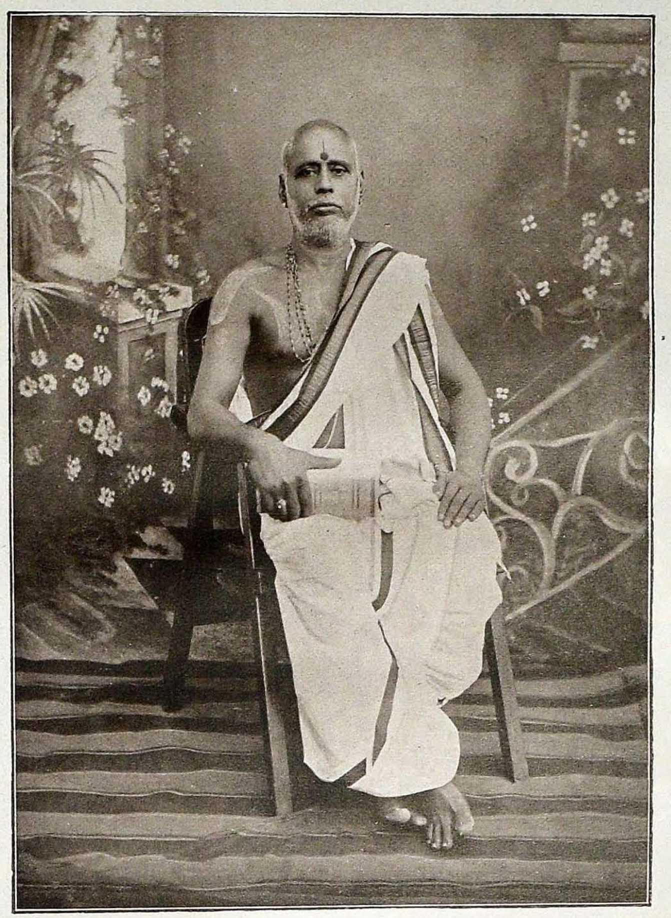
It is again no wonder that two eminent Judges—Messrs V. V. Srinivasa Aiyangar of Madras and K. S. Chandrasekhara Aiyar of Mysore came independently to the same conclusion that Srimati C. Saraswati Bai's sterling merit and standing brilliance demanded a much greater recognition than the one now given (pp. 120, 29).

One word about *Saraswati Bai's Guru*, Sri. T. Krishnachar of Thiruvayar; and I shall have done. What Moore was to Byron, what Lockhart was to Scott, and what Boswell was to Johnson—that, Sri. T. Krishnachar has been to

Srimati C. Saraswati Bai. Whereas the first three had presented their respective prodigies, in books; the last did his, in actual flesh and blood. An erudite Sanskrit scholar, steeped in the glorious tradition of the Carnatic Music, Sri Krishnachar was the first to realise the immense possibilities of the girl Saraswati Bai as well as to conceive the idea of training her as a Harikatha Performer.

Accordingly, he gave up his Sanskrit Panditship of the Madras Christian College and threw his heart and soul into the sacred work of directing the education of his prodigy in the great art of Kalakshepam and of moulding her to what she now is.

As long, therefore, as the name of Srimati C. Saraswati Bai endures, so long will endure the name of her good, old, venerable guide, friend, and philosopher—Sri T. Krishnachar.



PANDIT T. KRISHNACHAR
(Srimati C. Saraswati Bai's Guru)

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

BY

SRIMATI C. SARASWATI BAI, H.P.M.D.

என் ஹரிகதா அநுபவம்.

(ஆனந்தவிகடன், தீபாவளி மலர், 1935)

தலைப்பைப்பார்த்ததும், நான் கதைக்கு ஆரம்பித்த நாள் முதல் நாளது வரையில் ஹரிகதை செய்வதில் நான் அடைந்த தேர்ச்சியைப்பற்றி எழுதி, அதனால் உங்கள் அரிய நேரத்தை வீணாக்கப் போவதாக நினைக்க வேண்டாம். ஸ்திரீகள் பகிரங்கமாய்ப் புருஷர்கள் மத்தியில் கதை செய்வது என்னும் வழக்கம் நான் கதைக்கு ஆரம்பித்த ஸமயம் இல்லாமல், நானே புதிதாய் ஆரம்பித்ததால், அச்சமயம் எனக்கேற்பட்ட பலவகைத் துன்பங்களையும், நான் அவைகளைப் பொறுத்துக் கொண்டு கதை செய்ய ஆரம்பித்த விதத்தையும் வெளியிட்டு, அதனால் உலக ஸ்வபாவத்தை நீங்கள் அறிந்து ஆச்சரியப்பட வேண்டுமென்றே இதை எழுதத் துணிகிறேன்.

இக் காலத்தைப்போல் என் பால்ய காலத்தில் பெண் கல்வி அவ்வளவு அபிவிருத்தி அடையவில்லை. மேல் வகுப்பில் படிக்கும் பெண்களைப் பரிகசிக்கும் காலம் அது. யாராவது ஸ்திரீகள் சுருதி லய சுத்தமாய் பாடினால் பல வகையில் நிந்திப்பார்கள். தவிரவும் ஓர் உபாத்தியாயரைக்கொண்டு வீட்டில் ஸங்கீதம் கற்பிக்கப் போதுமான திரவியமும் என் பெற்றோர்களுக்கு இருக்கவில்லை. மேலும் என் பால்யத்தில் நான் ஸதா ஏதாவது ஒரு வியாதியினால் பிடிக்கப்பட்டுவந்ததால், எனக்குப் படிப்பும் வேண்டாம், பாட்டும் வேண்டாம்; நான் ஸௌக்கியமாயிருந்தால் அதுவே போதுமானதென்பது என் பெற்றோர்களின் கருத்து.

இப்படி இருக்கையில், என்னுடைய ஆறு அல்லது ஏழாவது வயதில் ஒரு பெரிய குடும்பத்தார் தம் அருமை புதல்விக்கு ஒரு ஹிந்துஸ்தானி ஸங்கீத வித்வானைக் கொண்டு ஹிந்துஸ்தானி ஸங்கீதம் கற்பித்தார்கள். அப்பெண்ணோடு நானும் கூடக் கற்றுக்கொள்ள ஸந்தர்ப்பம் ஏற்பட்டது என் அதிர்ஷ்டம் என்றே சொல்லவேண்டும். ஏதோ கொஞ்சம் பாட்டும்,

ஸிதார், ஹார்மோனியம் வாசிக்கவும் கற்றேன். சுருதிலய நிதானம் ஏற்பட்டிருந்ததால், யாரும் கேட்டு ஆனந்திக்கும்படி சுத்தமாய்ப் பாடுவேன்.

இதன் மத்தியில் என்னுடைய ஒன்பதாவது வயதில், சேலத்திலுள்ள ஓர் ஏழைக் குடும்பத்தில் எனக்கு விவாகம் நடந்தது. ஆகையால் என் இரு பக்கத்தாராலும் எனக்கு எவ்வித வித்தையைக் கற்பிக்கவோ, அதனால் நான் மேன்மையை அடையவோ நியாயமில்லை. அவ்விரு குடும்பத்தாருக்காவது எனக்காவது அவ்வித உத்தேசமுமில்லை.

ஒரு சமயம் என் வீட்டில் நடந்த ஒரு விசேஷ காலத்தில், பல வைதிகர்களும், லௌகிகர்களும், பந்துக்களும் வந்திருந்தார்கள். என் பெற்றோர்கள் ஆசையால் அவர்கள் எதிரில் என்னைப் பாடச் சொன்னார்கள். நானும் பாடினேன். எல்லோரும் ஸந்தோஷித்ததாய்க் காணப்பட்டது. ஆனால் அவர்களில் ஒரு மஹா வித்வான் விசேஷமாய் ஆனந்தித்து, முழுமனதோடு ஆசீர்வதித்ததுமன்னியில், "இப்பெண்ணின் அறிவு ஸாமான்யமானதல்ல; ஈசுவரானுக்கிரகத்தால் ஏதோ ஒரு வகையில் மிகவும் மேன்மையை அடைவாள்; அதற்கு நானும் என்னாலான உதவி செய்கிறேன்," என்று அவராகவே தெரிவித்தார். அதை நானும் என் பெற்றோர்களும் வெறும் ஆசீர்வாதமாய் நினைக்காமல் அநுக்கிரகமாய்ப் பாவித்தோம். அந்தப்படியே அவர் மறுநாள் என் வீட்டுக்கு வந்து தாமாகவே ஸம்ஸ்கிருத பாடம் ஆரம்பித்தார். ஏற்கனவே நான் தெலுங்கு பாஷையைத் தாராளமாய் எழுதவும் படிக்கவும் கற்றிருந்ததால், ஸம்ஸ்கிருதம் கற்பது ஸுலபமாயிருந்தது. கொஞ்சம் தமிழ் பாஷையையும் கற்றுவந்தேன். அந்த வித்வான் யார் என்பதை முன்னதாக அறிவித்துப் பிறகு மேலே சொல்ல வேண்டியதைச் சொல்லுகிறேன். அவர்தான் இப்பவும் எனக்கு ஸத்குருவாய் விளங்கும் பிரம்மஸ்ரீ திருவையாறு கிருஷ்ணசார் அவர்கள். என்னை அறிந்த அனைவரும் அவரையும் அறிந்திருக்கக்கூடும். ஆனால் அவர் யோக்யதை அநேகருக்குத் தெரிந்திருக்க நியாயமில்லை. என் ஒருத்திக்கே அவர் யோக்யதை பூர்ணமாய்த் தெரியும். அவர் வியாகரண வேதாந்த அலங்கார சாஸ்திரங்களை ஸம்பூர்ணமாய்க் கற்றவர். ராக தாள பாவாத்மகமான ஸங்கீத ஸ்வரூபத்தை நன்றாய் அறிந்தவர். லௌகிக ஞானமோ அபாரம். சுருங்கச்சொன்னால் அவருக்குத் தெரியாத விஷயமே கிடையாதென்பது என் அபிப்ராயம். அவர் எனக்குப் பாடம் சொல்லும் ஸமயம் மதராஸ் கிறிஸ்தவ காலேஜில் ஸம்ஸ்கிருத பண்டிதராய் இருந்தார். அவர் வர வர அந்த உத்தியோகத்தையும் பெரி

தாக மதிக்காமல் என்னை முன்னுக்குக் கொண்டுவருவதிலேயே நோக்கமா யிருந்தார். அதற்காக என்னிடமிருந்து எவ்வித பிரதிப்பிரயோஜனத் தையும் திரிகரணத்தாலும் எதிர்பார்க்கவில்லை. யாராவது ஸங்கீத வித்வான் களை அழைத்து வந்து அவ்வப்போது சிற்சில கீர்த்தனைகளைப் பாடம்சொல்லி வைத்து, அவற்றின் ராக பாவதாளங்களைச் சுத்தப்படுத்தி, அர்த்தத்தையும் விவரித்துச் சொல்லி, பிறகுதான் அவைகளை யாராவது கேட்க வந்தவர்கள் எதிரில் பாடச் செய்வார்.

என் சிறு பிராயத்தில் என் பாட்டைக்கேட்டு ஆனந்தித்தவர்களில் காலஞ்சென்ற தஞ்சாவூர் பஞ்சாபகேச பாகவதர், அண்ணாமலை சங்கீத கலா சாலை பிரின்ஸ்பால் ஸ்ரீமான் ஸபேசய்யர், பிடில் கோவிந்தஸாமிப் பிள்ளை, மிருதங்கம் மெலட்டூர் கிருஷ்ணய்யர், புதுக்கோட்டை ஸ்ரீமான் தக்ஷிணாமூர்த்தி பிள்ளை, பிரம்மஸ்ரீ காயகசிகாமணி முத்தையா பாகவதர் இவர்களைக் குறிப்பிட லாம். இவர்கள் அடிக்கடி என் வீட்டுக்கு வந்து, நான் பாடும் கர்நாடக ஹிந்துஸ்தானி ஸங்கீதத்தைக் கேட்டு ஆனந்திப்பார்கள்.

ஒரு சமயம் என் பத்து அல்லது பதினோராவது வயதில், பிடில் கோவிந்தஸாமிப் பிள்ளை அவர்கள் தமக்கு மைசூர் சமஸ்தானத்தில் ஸன் மானம் செய்த மேலான ஒரு சால்வையைக் கொண்டுவந்து, " நீங்கள் நேற்றுப் பாடின முத்துக்குமரையனே என்னும் கீர்த்தனைக்கு இது ஸன்மானமா யிருக்கட்டும், " என்று ஸன்மானம் செய்தார். அதுவே நான் பெற்ற முதல் ஸன்மானம். அவர் எவ்வளவு உண்மையான மனதுடன் ஸன்மானம் செய் தார் என்பது பின்னால் நான் கணக்கில்லாமல் வாங்கின ஸன்மானங்களால் தெரிகிறது.

என்னை எவ்வளவோ விவேகிகள் பாட்டுக் கச்சேரி செய்யலாம் என்று தூண்டினார்கள். அது எனக்காவது, என் பெற்றோர்களுக்காவது, என் குருவுக்காவது ருசிக்கவில்லை. அந்த ஸமயம் மதராஸ் ஹைக்கோர்ட்டில் பிரஸித்த ஹைக்கோர்ட் ஜட்ஜாக இருந்த ஸர் சங்கர நாயர் பாரியை லேடி சங்கர நாயரவர்கள் ஸ்திரீகளின் முன்னேற்ற நிமித்தமாக ஸ்திரீகளின் சங்கம் ஒன்று ஏற்படுத்தியிருந்தார். அது ஒவ்வொரு வியாழக்கிழமையும் ஸாயங்காலம் நாலு மணி முதல் ஆறு மணி வரையில் நடக்கும். அதன் நடவடிக்கைகளின் முக்கிய அம்சங்கள் நாலு நாலு பெயராய்த் தனித் தனியே உட்காருவதும், அவரவர்கள் வீட்டு யோக க்ஷேமங்களைப் பேசுவதும்தான். ஒருவருடைய நகைகளையும், புடவையையும் மற்றவர் பூஷிப்பது அல்லது தூஷிப்பது;

சமயல் விசாரிப்பது; ஸம்ஸாரம் நடத்துவதில் உள்ள ஸாமர்த்தியம்; தான் புருஷனை அடக்கிவைத்திருப்பது அல்லது தான் புருஷனுக்குள்ளடங்கி ஒரு கோடிகூட மீருமல் நடப்பது; இவை முதலிய முக்கிய விஷயங்களைப்பற்றியே அவர்கள் சம்பாஷிப்பது வழக்கம். இத்தகைய பேச்சு ஒவ்வொரு சமயம் மனஸ்தாபத்திலும் முடியும்.

இந்த ஸமாஜத்திற்கு நானும் சில ஸமயம் ஒரு பெரிய குடும்பத்து ஸ்திரீயோடு போக நேரிடும். அந்த நாளில் இக்காலத்தைபோல் ஒவ்வொரு வீட்டிலும் சிறு பெண்கள் ஏதாவது ஒரு வகையில் ஸங்கீதப் பயிற்சியுள்ளவர்களா யிருக்கமாட்டார்கள். சிலருக்கு மாத்திரம் ஏதோ கொஞ்சம் பாடத் தெரிந்திருக்கும். அதுவும் பாடினுல் கர்ண கடூரமாயிருக்கும். ஆகையால் நான் போகும் தினங்களில் என்னைக் கட்டாயம் பாடச் சொல்வார்கள். நான் ஓர் ஏழைப் பெண்தானே? என்னிடம் எல்லோருக்கும் கருணை. என்னிடம் அசூயை யாருக்குமே இருக்காது. எனக்குத் தெரிந்த பாட்டுக்களோ மிகவும் ஸ்வல்பம். அவைகளை எனக்கே பாடிப் பாடி அலுத்துவிட்டது. சில வாரங்களில் ஸிதார் என்னும் வாத்தியம் வாசித்தேன். பிறகு சில சுலோகங்களைச் சொல்லி வந்தேன். எல்லா வகையும் ஆய்விட்டது. இது நடுவில் என் குரு ஒரு யுக்தி செய்தார். "ஸ்திரீகளின் கடமை", "பதி பக்தி", "முற்காலத்திய கற்றறிந்த ஸ்திரீகள்" என்று பொருக்கிய சில உபந்நியாசங்களைத் தயாரித்துக்கொடுத்தார். அவைகளை அங்கே போய்ச் சொன்னேன். அதனுல் அவர்கள் ஆனந்தித்தாலும், அப்போதும் முடிவில் கொஞ்சம் பாடச்சொல்லாமல் விடவில்லை. பிறகு "ஈசுவர பக்தி" என்னும் விஷயத்தைப்பற்றி ஹரி கதைகளுக்குப் பூர்வாங்கமாய்ச் சொல்வதுபோல் ஒரு மஹாராஷ்டிர பதத்தை ஆரம்பத்தில் பாடி, அதை ஒட்டிப் பிரசங்கம் செய்ததில் எல்லோருக்கும் மிகவும் ஆனந்தமுண்டாகி பரம ஆச்சரியத்தை அடைந்தார்கள். எனக்கும் மேலே மேலே ருசி பிறந்து, என் குரு உபதேசித்த பிரகாரம் கருட கர்வ பங்கம் என்னும் ஹரிகதையை ஸாகி, தண்டி, ஓவி, கணுக்ஷரி முதலிய பாட்டுகளோடு சில மாதங்கள் சிரமப்பட்டுக் கற்று, அதையும் ஒரு வியாழக்கிழமையில் ஷிஸ்திரீ சங்கத்தில் மிருதங்கம் பின்பாட்டோடு ஹரி கதையாகவே செய்தேன். இது 1908-ம் வருஷம் கடைசியில். என் குருவும் அன்று அங்கு வந்து தனியாய் ஓரிடத்தில் இருந்து கேட்டார். அந்த ஸமயம் ஸர் சங்கர நாயர் அவர்களும் என் குருவோடு உட்கார்ந்து கேட்க நேர்ந்தது. அன்று சபை அதி குதூகலத்தோடு இருந்தது.

கதையின் முடிவில் லேடி சங்கர நாயர் என்னை ஸர் சங்கர நாயரிடம் அழைத்து வந்து, கதையைப் பற்றிப் புகழ்ந்தார். அவரும் விசேஷமாய் ஸந்தோஷித்து, "ஸங்கீதமும் பிரசங்கமும் இவ்வளவு மேன்மையாயிருக்கும் போது, இதை ஸ்திரீகளிடம் மாத்திரம் செய்வது என்று ஏன் வைத்துக் கொள்ளவேணும்? ஸ்திரீ புருஷர்கள் எல்லார் எதிரிலும் செய்யலாம். காலமும் முன்போலில்லை; ஸ்ரீமதி. ஸரோஜினி தேவி முதலியவர்கள் பொது சேவையில் ஈடுபடத் தாராளமாய் இடம் கொடுத்துவிட்டது. அப்படியே இதுவும் மேன்மையாய் விளங்கும். ஆரம்பத்தில் கொஞ்ச அமளி நடக்கும் தான். அதற்குப் பயப்படவேண்டாம்," என்று சொன்னார். அன்று வீடு வந்ததும் கதை நடந்த விமரிசைக்காக ஸந்தோஷப்படுவதற்குப் பதிலாக விசனப்பட ஆரம்பித்தோம். புருஷர்களும் உள்ள சபையில் கதை செய்வது ஸாத்தியமா, ஏதோ தற்காலம் அதிசயமாயிருப்பதால் ஒப்புக்கொண்டாலும், பிறகு நீடித்து நடக்கவேணுமே என்றெல்லாம் யோசித்து மானம், அவமானம், லாபம், நஷ்டம் எது வந்தாலும் சரி: பகிரங்கமாய்க்கதை செய்வது என்னும் தீர்மானத்திற்கு வந்துவிட்டோம்.

பாதிக் கலியாணக் கதையாய் நாம் தீர்மானித்தால் மாத்திரம் போதுமா? ஜனங்களல்லவா இடங்கொடுக்கவேண்டும்? அதற்காக என் குரு விசேஷமாய்க் கவலை கொண்டார். இதற்குள் நான் லேடி சங்கர நாயர் ஸொஸைடியில் கதை செய்ததும், இனிப்பகிரங்கமாய்க் கதை செய்ய எத்தனித்ததும் எங்கும் பரவியது. பொது ஜனங்களிலும் பல அபிப்பிராயங்கள் ஏற்பட்டன. ஆனால் அக்காலத்திலிருந்த ஸகல பாகவதர்களுக்கும் ஸங்கீத வித்வான்களுக்கும் ஏகமுகமாய் அசூயையும் துவேஷமும் ஏற்பட்டன. அடடா! துவேஷமாவது துவேஷம்! எழுதத்தரமல்ல. என் பெற்றோர்களையும் என் குருவையும், "கதை செய்யச் சொன்னீர்களோ, பாதாளம் வரையில் போய் விடுவீர்கள்," என்று பயமுறுத்தினார்கள். என் குருவை வேலையிலிருந்து நீக்க மதராஸ் கிறிஸ்டியன் காலேஜ் தலைவருக்குக் கடிதம் போட்டார்கள். ஏற்கனவே என் ஸங்கீதத்தைக் கேட்டு ஆனந்தித்தவர்களை இடித்துக் காட்டி, அவர்களையும் தங்களுடன் சேர்த்துக் கொண்டார்கள். நாங்கள் எவ்வளவு எத்தனித்தும் எங்கும் இலவசமாய்க்கூடக் கதையை வைக்கவும், நாங்கள் எங்கேயாவது கதை செய்கிறோம் என்றாலும் வந்து கேட்கவும் ஜனங்கள் பயப்பட்டார்கள். நம் ஸங்கீத கோஷ்டிகளுக்குள் எவ்வளவோ வேற்றுமை யிருந்தாலும், இது விஷயத்தில் ஒன்றுபட்டு சிரத்தையுடன் வேலை செய்தார்கள். எனக்கும் புருஷர்கள் எதிரில் கதை செய்வது

ஸாத்தியமா அல்லவா என்னும் விஷயத்தில் ஸம்சயம் இருந்ததால், காலம் தள்ளிக்கொண்டே போவது கொஞ்சம் ஸமாதானமாகவே இருந்தது.

இந்த மத்தியில் மயிலாப்பூரில் ஒரு பிரபு ஏதோ தமாஷாய்த்தான் கேட்போமே என்று பல கனவான்களையும் வரவழைத்து, என் கதையை நடத்தச் செய்தார். வந்தவர்களும் அத்யானந்தமடைந்து விட்டதால், என் ஸம்சயம் நீங்கி, எப்போது பகிரங்கமாய்க் கதை செய்யபோகிறேம் என்ற ஏக்கம் பலமாய் ஏற்பட்டது. இந்த வர்த்தமானம் தெரிந்த பாகவதர்கள் இன்னும் ஜரூராய் வேலை செய்ய ஆரம்பித்தார்கள். அக்காலத்தில் பிரஸித்தமாயிருந்த பகவத்கதா பிரஸங்க ஸபைகளில் ஒரு விசேஷக் கூட்டம் ஏற்படுத்தி, "ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் கதையை நம் ஸபையில் நடத்தினுல், பாடகர்களும் பாகவதர்களும் பிறகு நம் ஸபைக்குக் கண்டிப்பாய் வரமாட்டோம்" என்று தெரிவித்துவிட்டதால், எக்காரணத்தாலும் ஷெ ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் கதையை வைப்பதில்லை" என்று அழுத்தமாய்த் தீர்மானித்துவிட்டார்கள். அப்படியே அங்குள்ள கனவான்களுக்கும் தனவான்களுக்கும் இவர்கள் எச்சரிக்கை செய்திருந்தார்கள்.

1909-ம் ஹு ஜனவரியில் ஸமுத்திரம் பொங்கி, தேசமெல்லாம் ஜலத்தில் முழுகப்போகிறது என்னும் வதந்தி பலமாயிருந்தது. அந்த ஸமயம், "அடாடா, இவ்வளவு சிரமப் பட்டு விமரிசைசையாகக் கதைகளைக் கற்றும் எல்லாம் வீணுகி விடுகிறதே. நான் ஒருநாளாவது பெரிய மகா ஸபையில் கதை செய்து கியாதி பெற்றபிறகு தேசம் முழுகக்கூடாதா?" என்று நினைத்தேன். நல்லவேளையாய்க் குறித்த காலத்தில் ஸமுத்திரம் பொங்கவில்லை. கதைசெய்ய என் ஆசைதான் பொங்கிற்று.

சத்திரம், சாவடி இப்படி எங்கேயாவது கதை செய்வோமென்றாலும் பக்கப்பாட்டு, மிருதங்கம் கிடைப்பதும் அரிதாகிவிட்டது. முன் இரண்டு கதைகளுக்கு வந்தவர்களும் "நமக்குஸரியான பிராயச்சித்தம் ஆகிவிட்டது. இனி நாம் சுத்தமாகிவிட்டோம்" என்று சொல்லிவிட்டார்கள். கடைசியில் எப்படியோ, 1909-ம் ஹு பிப்ரவரி மாதம் 22-ம் தேதி ஞாயிற்றுக்கிழமை சாயங்காலம் நாலு மணிக்கு, சென்னை தங்கசாலைத் தெரு ஹிந்து தியலாஜிகல் ஸ்கூல் ஹாலில் "ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் என்னும் பிராமணச் சிறுமியால் 'இராம கிருஷ்ண பட்டாபிஷேகம்' (கருட கர்வபங்கம்) என்னும் காலக்ஷேபம் செய்யப்படும். டிக்கெட் விவரம் இன்னது, ஆர்கனைஸர் ஸ்ரீ பார்த்த ஸாரதிஸ்வாமி" என்று விளம்பரம் செய்து தெய்விகமாய்க் கதைக்கு ஏற்பாடாயிற்று. அன்று வந்தி

ருந்த ஜனக்கூட்டம் அபாரம். அடைந்த ஆனந்தத்திற்கு அளவேயில்லை. எனக்கு அன்று ஸன்மானம் ரூ. 450 செய்யப்பட்டது. கதையை ஏற்படுத்தியவர் கதையின் முடிவில் என்னைப்பற்றி ஏதோ ஸ்தோத்திரமாய்ச் சொல்லுகையில், "ஆரம்பத்தில் செய்த இந்தக்கதையின் விமரிசையைக் கவனித்தால் போகப்போகப் பாகவதர்கள் சிப்ளாவை வைத்துவிட்டு வேறு ஏதாவது தொழில் செய்ய வேண்டியதுதான்" என்று அஸப்பியமாய்ப் பேசிவிட்டார். அவ்வளவுதான், ஆடும் பிசாசத்திற்குத் தூபம் போடுவது போலாகிவிட்டது பாகவதர்களின் கோபம்.

இந்த சமயம் மற்றொரு ஸங்கதியைக் குறிப்பிட வேண்டியிருக்கிறது. நான் கதையை ஆரம்பித்த ஸமயம் உத்தம பாகவதர்களுக்கு மதராஸிலேயே ரூ. 50 க்கு மேல் ஸன்மானம் கிடையாது. மேலும் ஏதோ தமாஷாய்க் கேட்டோம் என்றில்லாமல் ஜனங்களும் என்னை விசேஷமாய்க் கௌரவிக்க ஆரம்பித்து விட்டார்கள். சென்னையில் ஒவ்வொரு ஞாயிற்றுக் கிழமையும் என் கதை நடந்து கொண்டே இருக்கும். சபைகளில் வைக்கா விட்டாலும் ஏதாவது பகிரங்கமான இடத்தில் வியாபார முறையில் யாராவது கதையை வைத்துக் கொண்டே இருப்பார்கள். எனக்கு ஒரு கதைக்கு ரூ. 105 அக்காலத்தில் கொடுத்தார்கள். இதற்காக பாகவதர்கள் என்னை எந்தெந்த வகையில் உபத்திரவித்தார்கள் என்பதை ஏகதேசம் நான் எழுதினாலும் வாசகர்களுக்கு அது அருவருப்பா யிருக்குமாதலால் விட்டுவிடுகிறேன். புதிதாய் ஒருபாடகரோ பாகவதரோ தொழில்செய்யப் புறப்பட்டால், ஏற்கனவே ஸர்வமான்யம்போல் அனுபவித்துவந்த பழைய பாகவதர்கள் கொஞ்சம் அசூயைப் படுவதுண்டு; அதனால் துவேஷ காரியம் ஒன்றும் விளையாது; நாளடைவில் பரஸ்பரம் ஒன்றாகிவிடுவார்கள். என் விஷயமோ அப்படியல்ல. தீர்க்க துவேஷம் உண்டாகிவிட்டது அவர்களுக்கு. ஸ்திரீகள் கதைசெய்வது தர்மசாஸ்திர விரோதம் என்பதற்காக அப்படி விரோதித்தார்கள் என்றும் சொல்வதற்கில்லை. வெளிக்கு மாத்திரம் அந்தக் காரணத்தைச் சொல்லிவந்தார்கள்.

பிறகு சில மாதங்களில் இரண்டொரு சபைகளிலும் என் கதையை வைத்து ஆதரிக்க ஆரம்பித்தார்கள். அதிசீக்கிரத்திலேயே, கருணாமூர்த்தியான பகவானுடைய அனுக்கிரகத்தாலும், என் குருவின் பரிபூர்ண ஆசீர்வாதத்தாலும், முயற்சியாலும், தென்னிந்தியாவில் எங்கும் சபைகளுடையவும் கனவான்களுடையவும் ஆதரவு ஏற்பட்டு என்தொழிலை ஜாக்கிரதையாய்ச் செய்து வந்தேன். அக்காலத்தில் 'ஆனந்த விகடன்' போலுள்ள பத்திரிகை

களாவது, அதிலும் "ஆடல் பாடல்" என்னும் தனிபகுதியாவது, அசூயை யின்றி உள்ளதை உள்ளபடியே எழுதக்கூடிய நிருபர்களாவது கிடையாது என்பதையும் குறிப்பிடவேண்டி யிருக்கிறது. நிஜயோக்கியதையுள்ள ஒருவரை ஒரு நல்ல பத்திரிகை அதிசீக்கிரத்தில் கைதூக்கி விடலாமல்லவா?

ஆரம்பத்தில் நான் எவ்வளவு கஷ்டத்தை அனுபவித்தாலும், தக்க யோக்கியதையுள்ள ஸ்திரீகள் கதை செய்தால் அதைப் பொதுஜனங்கள் ஆதரிப்பார்கள் என்பது வெளியாகிவிட்டது. தற்காலம் ஸகல பாகவதர்களும் பாடகர்களும் என்னிடம் சகோதர வாஞ்சையுடனிருக்கிறுர்கள் என்பதைச் சந்தோஷத்தோடு தெரிவித்துக் கொள்ளுகிறேன்.

1912-ல் நான் பம்பாய் நகரம் சென்றிருந்தபோது அங்கே சில கான்ஸர்ட்கள் செய்தேன். அங்கு நடந்த வைபவத்தையும் ஒவ்வொரு பத்திரிகையும் என்னை ஆதரித்து எழுதியதையும் வர்ணிப்பதென்ருல் தற்புகழ்ச்சி யாகுமென்றே நிறுத்துகிறேன். மற்ருெரு ஸமயம் பம்பாய் கந்தர்வ மஹாவித்யாலய பிரின்ஸ்பால் விஷ்ணுதிகம்பர் என்னும் ஸங்கீத மஹாவித்வான் ஒருமஹா சபையில் எனக்கு "காயனபடு" என்னும் பிருதை அளித்தார்.

1920-ல் பூனு நகரில் நடந்த என் கதைகளில் ஸ்ரீ இராமபட்டாபிஷேக கதைக்கு விஜயம் செய்திருந்த லோகமான்ய பாலகங்காதர திலகர் கதைமுடியும் வரையில் இருந்து, பூனு பொதுஜனங்களால் கொடுக்கப்பட்ட மெடலை எனக்குக் கொடுக்கும்பொழுது "கீர்த்தனபடு" என்னும் பிருதையும் அளித்து அனுக்கிரகித்தார். அங்கே கீர்த்தனம் என்ருல் காலட்சேபத்துக்குப் பெயர்.

ஹைதராபாத், மைசூர், திருவாங்கூர், கொச்சி, இராமநாதபுரம், ஹிந்தூர், தேவாஸ் முதலியசமஸ்தானங்களில் அடிக்கடி தோடா, சால்வை முதலியவைகளையும், ஸங்கீத சபைகளிலும் பொதுஸ்தலங்களிலும் 136 மெடல்களையும் ஸன்மானமாக அடைந்திருக்கிறேன். பிடில் மஹா வித்வான் திருச்சி கோவிந்தசாமிப் பிள்ளை அவர்கள் என் இராமதாஸ் சரித்திரக்கதைக் யைக் கேட்டு, தோடா ஸன்மானம் செய்ததை மிகவும் பெருமையுடன் தெரிவித்துக் கொள்ளுகிறேன்.

இக்காலத்தில் மகாஜனங்கள் எனக்கு அளித்துவரும் பேராதரவையும், சங்கீத வித்வான்கள் என்னிடம் காட்டிவரும் அபிமானத்தையும் எண்ணிப் பார்க்கும்போது, ஆரம்ப நாட்களில் நான் பட்ட கஷ்டங்களெல்லாம் உண்மை தானு அல்லது ஸ்வப்னமா என்றுகூட சில சமயம் சந்தேகம் உண்டாகிறது. எல்லாம் பகவான் அருள்.

TRIBUTES

OF

APPRECIATION

-·· Arranged in Chronological Order ··-

MADRAS

Telugu verses composed by Sri **G. Rangiah Naidu,** *M.L.A. and Municipal Councillor, Madras and addressed to Srimati* **C. Saraswati Bai** *a gifted young Brahmin Lady Bhagavathar of Triplicane, Madras, on the occasion of her Harikatha Kalakshepam on* **Garudagarvabhangam,** *in the High School Hall of Pitty Thyagaraya Chettiar, Washermanpet, on Sunday the 4th April 1909.*

శ్రీ సీతారామపరబ్రహ్మణేనమః

సీ॥ శ్రీయుతాకారమై చెలఁగెమాధవుపత్ని - శ్రీయుతాకారవై చెలఁగితీవు ।
విద్యాస్వరూపమై వెలసెఁబద్మజురాణి - విద్యాస్వరూపవై వెలసితీవు ।
శివరూపమున బెంపుఁ జెందెఁబర్వతపుత్రి - శివరూపమున బెంపుఁ జెందితీవు ।
గురు భక్తిచేతను మెఱసెఁదానిందాగ్రిణి - గురు భక్తిచేతను మెఱసితీవు ॥

తే॥ వీరలకునీకునెన్నిట వెదకిచూడ । దైవమానుషత్వమ్ములు దక్కఁదాల్య ।
మేకవిధమయ్యె దైవత్వమొకటియున్నజక్క । గనువీరలకునీవు సాటివగుదు ॥

సీ॥ ధనకామినీమణీ జనసమూహములోనఁ - గలరుకాంతలుమీరి గానవిద్యఁ ।
గులకామినీరత్న ములలోనఁబెక్కండ్రు - హెచ్చియున్నారుసాహిత్యవిద్య ।
నటయువతులయందు నయముగాఁబలువురు - నేర్చియుండిరిగొప్ప నృత్యవిద్య ॥
స్త్రీలనేకులుమెప్పుఁ జెందియుండిరిచాల - నాణెంపుహస్తవిన్యాసవిద్యఁ ॥

తే॥ గానినినీవలెసాహిత్యగాననృత్య । హస్తవిన్యాసవిద్యలనమర నేర్చి ।
శాస్త్రసమ్మతముగమహాజనసభలను । జూపఁగలకాంతలనుభువిఁజూడమమ్మ ॥

సీ॥ చంచలత్వముమాని సమతనొప్పినలక్ష్మి । సాటియుచనిచెప్పఁ జనునుసుమ్ము ।
పలుమొగమ్ములువీడి పరఁగనేసియువాణి - సాటియంచనిచెప్పఁ జనునసుమ్ము ।
సామేనశివరూప మూమెదాల్పకయున్న - గౌరిసాటియనంగఁ గలముసుమ్ము ।
మక్కువమగనికాల్ద్రొక్కియొప్పిననరుం - ధతిపాటియనిచెప్పఁదగునసుమ్ము ॥

తే॥ ఇట్టిగుణములువారల కెపుడుసహజ । గుణములైయుంటనీతోడ గొనములధర ।
సాటిసేయంగఁదగినట్టి బోటులెందుఁ । బూర్ణబిందువులనిచెప్పఁ బోలునమ్మ ॥

సీ॥ సర్వజ్ఞుడై సర్వ సాక్షియై సర్వభూ - తాంతరుండైన శ్రీ హరికినైనఁ ।
బేసికన్నులుగల్గి బేసిమోములుగల్గి - నటియుంచునామహా నటునికైన ।
నాల్గుమోములుగల్గి నాల్గుమిన్కులుగల్గి - భారతీసతిఁగూడు బ్రహ్మకైనఁ ।
బెక్కునోరులుగల్గి పెక్కునాల్కలుగల్గి - ప్రబలియొప్పెడి శేష ఫణికినైన ॥

తే॥ నిన్నుఁ బొగడనశక్యంబు నేనదెంత । సకలవిద్యాస్వరూపిణి శారదయని ।
గ్రంథములవిందుమే కాని కననికొఱతఁ । దీర్ఘఁబుట్టినపద్మజు దేవివమ్మ ॥

సీ॥ ధనధాన్యవస్తువాహనసమృద్ధులనిచ్చి - మాసతీపతినిన్ను మనుచుఁగాత ।
నాయురారోగ్యపుత్రాదిసంపదలిచ్చి - వనజసంభవుఁడునిన్మనుచుఁగాత ।
సర్వార్థసిద్ధిఁదా నిర్వక్రముగనిచ్చి - మైబూదిదొరనిన్ను మనుచుఁగాత !
నఖిలామరశ్రేణి యాదరంబొప్పని - న్మానధనంబిచ్చి మనుచుఁగాత ॥

తే॥ శ్రీమహాలక్ష్మివాణియుశీతగిరిజ । లెపుడుశిరులనువిశవములందు ।
నిలిచికరుణాకటాక్షంబు మొలకలెత్త - గాకనుదళుకొత్తమనుతురు కాతమమ్మ ॥

శ్రీ. శ్రీ. శ్రీ. శ్రీ.

1909-సం॥
ఏప్రల్ నెల 7-వ తేది.

ఇట్లు బుధవిధేయుఁడు,
☞ గద్దె. రంగయ్యనాయుడు.

The Times of Madras, 22nd August, 1911 :—

The hall was crowded and **Srimati C. Saraswati Bai** kept the audience spell-bound by her *irreproachable, attractive,* and *melodious music* and most eloquent speech. *Southern India must be proud of having produced a talented lady so well versed in music.* The people who attended her performances are under the impression that *Saraswati* (Goddess of Learning) herself has come down in the form of Mrs. C. Saraswati Bai. The one great feature we find in her is her possession of a most melodious and attractive voice combined with a great knowledge of music. The Guzeratis, who have settled down here for trade and who are from Bombay, openly declared that her Hindustani songs were surpassingly good.

The Madras Standard, 25th April, 1912 :—

Srimati C. Saraswati Bai thoroughly maintained her reputation and fulfilled the expectation of the audience. *The elements of romance, realism, humour and pathos, all attained their highest possible degree of treatment.* At the close of the performance, our Sub-Collector Mr. R. Narayana Iyer, M.A., I.C.S., eulogised the artist in a few well-chosen words. He spoke highly of her musical attainment, her remarkable powers of exposition, clear pronunciation, chaste diction and the flawless and perfect manner with which she performed her *Katha.*

BOMBAY.

Advocate of India, 27th January, 1913 :—

Mrs. Saraswati Bai, the well-known songstress of Southern India, gave her first musical concert at the Town Hall on Saturday night. As it was the first time a married Brahmin lady had appeared on a public platform as a songstress, there was a large number of lovers of Indian music present.

At the very outset Mrs. Saraswati Bai made a favourable impression on the audience with her sweet voice; *and her songs were highly appreciated and applauded by the discerning public.*

There are two schools of Indian music in vogue at present in India, the Northern and the Southern; and although the former seems to be more popular, it is possible that if artists of the stamp of Mrs. Saraswati Bai (who intends touring round India) try to popularise it, people will take to it. In short, Mrs. Saraswati Bai's first attempt was a successful one.

Times of India, Bombay, 27th January, 1913 :—

Mrs. C. Saraswati Bai's concert in the Bombay Town Hall on Saturday evening was a great success. She is a Madrasi girl and has been, during a two years' tour in the Madras Presidency, awarded thirteen medals for the proficiency she had displayed *as a budding Indian songstress.*

The programme in Bombay consisted of eleven items divided into two parts; it was gone through with great credit. She began with rendering the song known as Kalyan in its Alap and Khyal forms ; by these *she ingratiated herself in the favour of her appreciative audience,* which numbered over one thousand.

Bombay Gazette, 10th February, 1913 :—

Mrs. Saraswati Bai, whose recent performance at the Town Hall was a splendid success, gave another splendid performance at the Cowasji Jehangir Hall of the University. She is the first Indian Lady Brahmin Baghavatar to appear on public stage-a daring social step that must have needed no little courage and that has at the same time opened the eyes of her sisters to a new field for their accomplishments. She *sings with consummate ease.* Her name is already a household word all over the Southern Presidency; and an equally great success is prophesied for her in Bombay. It is admitted that she is very proficient in Hindustani and Parsi songs and she has elicited commendation from professionals in that line.

The Hindu Prakash, 14th February, 1913 :—

Srimati C. Saraswati Bai is the only lady *in whole India* who could rightly exhibit talents in both schools of music, *viz.*, North Indian and South Indian, in a most scientific manner.

The Hindu Prakash, 15th February, 1913 :—

This talented young musician, who comes of a high Brahmin family of Madras, has shown an amount of courage in coming into the public and thus setting an example to her Indian sisters not only in cultivating the art of music but also extending its benefits to others. It is generally found that women as a class possess a sweet voice and, if it be properly trained and cultivated, it will work wonders as Mrs. Saraswati Bai has been doing. She possesses an exceptionally melodious voice and the skill with which she rendered some of the Ragas, the other day, *drew vociferous applause from an enthusiastic audience.* Her rendering of Yaman Kalyan and Desh were particularly happy *and were highly appreciated and very much applauded.*

The Times of India, Bombay, 17th February, 1913 :—

It was under the patronage of the Hon. Mr. Justice Beaman, with whom were present the Hon. Mr. Justice Rao and the Hon. Mr. Pattani. The vocalist sang with more confidence. Among her items *was a delightful "Pahadi" Gazal, a song much admired in Upper India.* In the second part of the programme *she was frequently applauded,* her rendering of "Bhairavi" being *particularly successful.* The endeavour to render Sanskrit Shlokas in a rapid transition of three different stages—Todi, Shankarabharan, and Ananda Bhairavi—*was especially notable.*

Advocate of India, 27th February, 1913 :—

Mrs. Saraswati Bai, the well-known Hindu songstress of Southern India, gave her second concert at the Framji Cowasjee Hall on Saturday night under the patronage of the Hon. Mr. Justice Beaman who was present with the Hon. Mr. Justice Rao, and the Hon. Mr. Pattani.

Her rendering of "Peelu," "Bhimpalas" and "Bhairavi" *were highly appreciated by the audience, amongst whom were many students of higher Indian music.* The vocalist also sang some popular songs from Gujerati and Marathi operas to please the galley, and she acquitted herself creditably in rendering them.

CEYLON.

The Ceylonese, 13th April, 1913 :—

Young, beautiful and extremely clever was the verdict unanimously passed by the large gathering present at the Public Hall last night, when the exceptionally gifted Brahmin lady-musician made her first bow to the Ceylon public. *Mrs. Saraswati Bai holds the enviable distinction of being the first Brahmin lady to appear on the stage, and by her superb singing last night fully justified her great reputation as one of the greatest exponents of Eastern music.* Gifted with a charming voice, low, melodious and carefully trained, perhaps her greatest claim in the world of music lies in her ability to reproduce the varying intonation with the greatest ease. To a gathering where the Eastern element predominated, her musical talents were highly appreciated ; and her soothing pathetic strains elicited an enthusiastic response from the listener. She sang selections from Hindustani, Telugu, and Tamil, and thus expounded the music of both the Northern and Southern portions of India.

Ceylonese, 14th April, 1913 :—

The Ceylonese has great pleasure again in bringing to the notice of its readers and others, the performance of Mrs. C. Saraswati Bai at the Public Hall to-night. There is not one who attended the last two performances of hers but expressed great satisfaction and spoke in highly eulogistic terms of the merits and great talents of the lady in Eastern music. Decidedly she is interesting all her hearers *and her charms are spoken of, far and wide, in all parts of the island.* Many are beginning to realise the sweetness of Eastern music and they find a true and clever exponent of it in the person of Mrs. C. Saraswati Bai: *It is worth one's while to hear this lady sing in different languages of the East with ease and self-confidence created in her by her full mastery of the art.*

Ceylon Morning Leader, 15th April, 1913 :—

Mrs. Srimati Saraswati Bai of Madras, the first Brahmin lady to appear on the public stage, made her *debut* at the Public Hall on Saturday night before a large and appreciative audience. Despite the uncertain state of the weather, there was a remarkably good audience. When the curtain rose, the audience was pleasantly surprised to see before them in the famous singer a graceful, young and extremely pretty lady, attired in typical Brahmin costume and wearing the numerous medals and tokens received by her from royal patrons and eminent persons in India, where she has just completed a three years' tour. She was seated on a *dias* draped with rich oriental tapestry, and she was supported by a select orchestra of clever players on the harmoniflute, cymbals and drum. Those who heard her sing on Saturday night are unanimous in their verdict that Mrs. Saraswati Bai *has a voice of which she might well be proud.* She *enraptured her audience* by her exquisite rendering of some of the most beautiful and difficult songs known to the northern and southern systems of Eastern classical music. *Her voice is rich, excellently trained and melodious*; and her songs included selections from Hindustani, Tamil, Telugu and Persian and English. *The music appealed to the audience immensely and she was frequently applauded.* The concert lasted about three hours with an interval of ten minutes. One of the best items was her interpretation of the *gazl* which was really classical and she fully maintained her great reputation by the manner in which she executed it. On the whole *the concert was a rare musical treat,* as unique as it was delightful.

Ceylonese, 16th April, 1913 :—

Mrs. Saraswati Bai, who made such a tremendous impression at her opening performance at the Public Hall last Saturday, is too well-known not to give a bumper house to-night. It is very seldom that even in a place like Colombo, so much patronised by great artists, that one comes across *a musician of such rare ability as that of Mrs. Saraswati Bai.* Her voice is one of *remarkable power and sweetness and to hear her is a real treat.*

Morning Leader, 17th April, 1913 :—

Mrs. C. Saraswati Bai, the talented young Brahmin lady-singer, scored another great success at the Public Hall last night, when she related in Tamil the story of "Nandanar Charitram" interspersing it with appropriate pieces of Hindustani and other music. There was a full house and the singer was deservedly applauded. She was in splendid form, and the concert was under the patronage of the Hon. Mr. A. Kanakasabai, M.L.C.

Independent, 21st April, 1913:—

Srimati Saraswati Bai, who has made a "hit" in Colombo since her arrival, gave her third concert at the Public Hall, on Saturday night, when a choice programme of songs in Tamil, Hindustani, Urdu and Persian, was gone through with consummate ability. A very large gathering was present composed mostly of Tamil ladies and gentlemen. The concert was under the patronage of Mr. C. Namasivayam, J. P., who was present with a large party of friends and relatives. Every item on the programme was gone through in fine style, and the talented lady was repeatedly encored. *At the close, Mr. Namasivayam stepped up to the stage and handed over a valuable 'Gold Medal' to Srimati Bai as a token of appreciation of her talents.*

Ceylonese, 23rd April, 1913:—

Mrs. Saraswati Bai received a brilliant reception last night at the Public Hall, when she gave her fare-well concert to the Ceylon Public. The large hall was fully crowded, the performance gaining additional attraction by the intimation that His Excellency the Acting Governor under whose patronage it was given, would be present. *His Excellency, who arrived immediately before the concert commenced, appeared quite delighted with the music of the talented young Brahmin-songstress, and did not leave the hall till the end of the concert.* On his arrival His Excellency was garlanded and sprinkled with rose-water according to oriental custom. Indeed too much praise cannot be bestowed on her singing. Gifted with a charming voice, she sang song after song in Hindustani, Urdu, Tamil, Parsi and Guzerati and treated the audience to a rare musical treat. At a time when Eastern music is being neglected and gives place to the music of Western nations, it is no little pleasure to have an opportunity of listening to one who is without doubt one of the most accomplished in Eastern music and the large audience present last night proved that the Ceylon public knows how to welcome and appreciate good music. Every song she sang was encored. There was no one in the hall who was not so impressed by the lady's singing as to wish *that she would prolong her visit for a few days longer, while some were heard to say that they regretted not having attended her previous concerts too.* The curtain fell after the last item to an enthusiastic audience who were loud in their praises of the excellent concert provided for them and all left the hall voting the performance a huge success.

Shortly after the treat, *His Excellency presented Mrs. Saraswati Bai with a 'gold medal' amidst loud cheers from the audience.*

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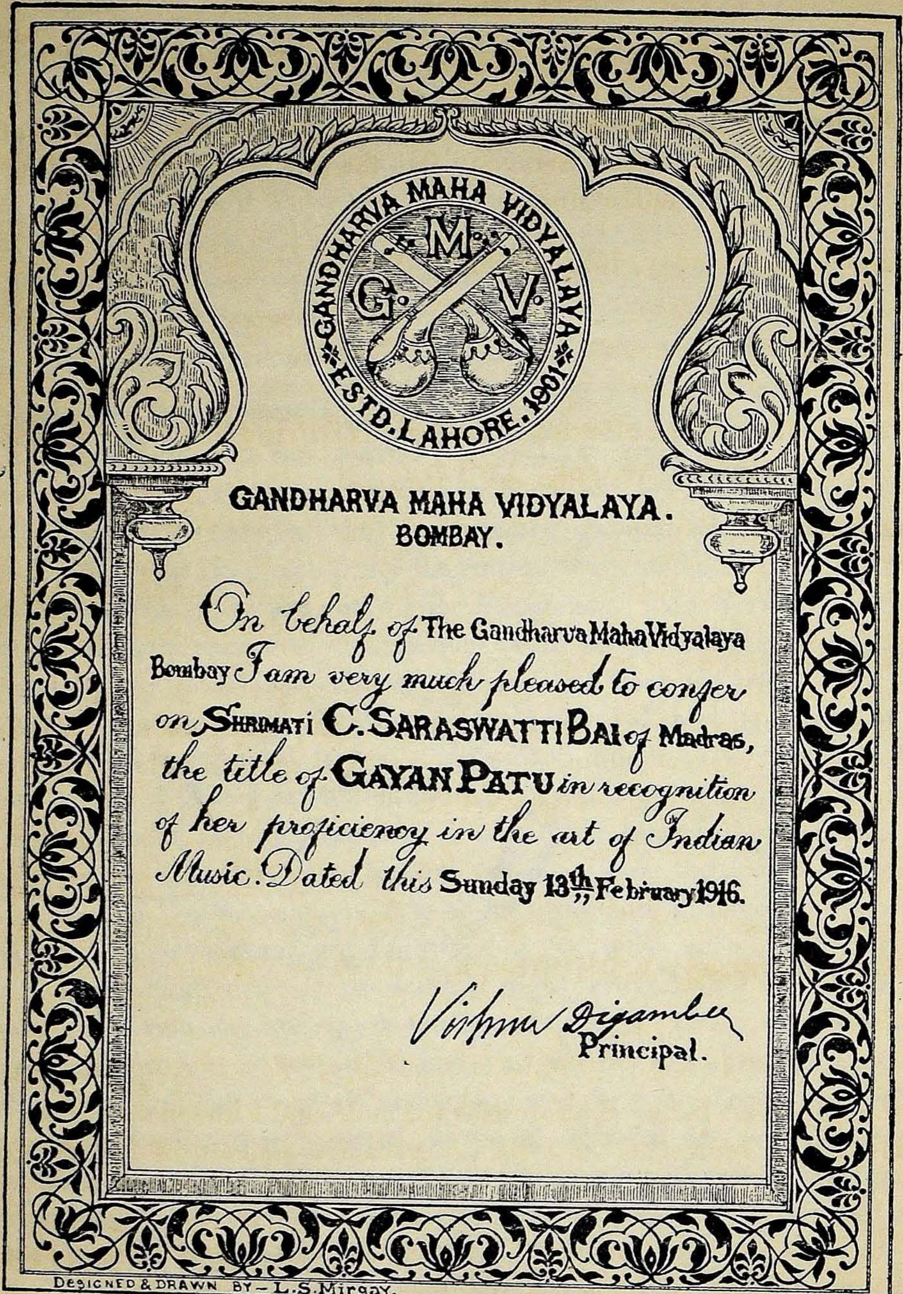

GANDHARVA MAHA VIDYALAYA · G · M · V · ESTD. LAHORE. 1901

GANDHARVA MAHA VIDYALAYA.
BOMBAY.

On behalf of The Gandharva Maha Vidyalaya Bombay I am very much pleased to confer on Shrimati C. Saraswatti Bai of Madras, the title of Gayan Patu in recognition of her proficiency in the art of Indian Music. Dated this Sunday 13th February 1916.

Vishnu Digamber
Principal.

Designed & Drawn by – L. S. Mirgay.

BOMBAY, again

The Gandharva Maha Vidyalaya, Bombay.

On behalf of the Gandharva Maha Vidyalaya Institute, I am very much pleased to confer on Shrimati C. Saraswati Bai, the title of "Gayan Patu" for her proficiency in the art of Indian Music.

Dated this Sunday, 13th February, 1916.

(Sd.) VISHNU DIGAMBAR,
Principal.

From Her Excellency Lady Willingdon, Government House, Bombay 9th March, 1916:—

DEAR MRS. SARASWATI BAI,

Her Excellency has instructed me to write and convey to you Her Excellency's thanks for the donation towards the Women's Branch War and Relief Fund, being proceeds of the concert.

Her Excellency wishes me to thank you very much indeed for all the work and trouble you took to make the concert a success. Her Excellency appreciates very much all that you have done.

Yours sincerely,
A. KENNET MACEWAN,
CAPT., A. D. C.

Cox & Co., Bombay, 15th March, 1916:—

DEAR MADAM,

I have received from Lt. Colonel Jennings a cheque for Rs. 422-8-0 as a donation to the East Indies Station Naval Fund, and I understand that the amount mentioned represents half the proceeds of a concert of Indian Music given by you.

On behalf of my Committee I would ask you to receive our sincere thanks for this handsome addition to our Funds.

Yours faithfully,

ARTHUR F. SELLS.

MADRAS, again

Chairman, The Punjab Relief Fund Committee, Mylapore, Madras, M.R.Ry. S. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar Avl., B.A., B.L., Editor of the Hindu, Madras. 14th October, 1919:—

To

GAYAN PATU SRIMATI C. SARASWATI BAI, MADRAS.

MADAM,

On behalf of the Punjab Relief Fund Committee, I hereby offer you our thanks for the benefit performance you gave us at the Gokhale Hall on Wednesday the 24th September, 1919.

The subject of your discourse was peculiarly appropriate to the occasion, *viz.*, " DRAUPADI MANASAMRATSHANAM," and your rendering of it *with the remarkable powers of exposition and the rare skill in music for which you are so well-known* attracted an appreciative audience. You have added substantially to the Relief Fund by your benefit performance.

I hereby convey to you the best wishes of the Committee for your continued good work and patriotic endeavours.

POONA

Mr. N. C. Kelkar—14th April 1920 :—

Both singing and preaching, Srimati C. Saraswati Bai performs to perfection; and with the aid of her own respectable status, she has exalted the art of music. Very impressive is her preaching.

Mr. Lokamanya Bala Gangadara Tilak, 15th April 1920 :—

I was present at one of the Harikirtanas performed by Mrs. Saraswati-Bai, a Madras lady, at the Kerloskar Theatre and had the pleasure of presenting her a 'gold medal', on behalf of the Poona public, for her proficiency in performing a Kirtan as well as for her learning in Tamil and Sanskrit. She addresses the audience in Tamil, but as the songs and texts used are in Sanskrit, one not knowing the Tamil language can easily understand her address and follow her right through. Her voice is melodious and singing very good.

HYDERABAD. (Deccan)

H. E. H. THE NIZAM'S PALACE, KING KOTI,

The Nizam of Hyderabad was pleased to hear the singing of Srimati Saraswati Bai, who showed great skill in the art of oriental music.

19th May 1920 (Sd.) AZHAR JUNG, Muntazim-i-Peshi.

MADRAS again

The Hindu Illustrated Weekly, 12th October 1930 :—

Blessed are the memories of the Bhagavatas, who with full-throated melodies and golden-hearted prodigality of inspiration, can make people stand on tip-toe, and lure them on to give themselves over into ecstasies of self-renovation. Srimati Saraswati Bai, writes Kappa in a recent issue of "Triveni", almost belongs to their class by sheer excellence of her Nandanar Charitram. Her endowments, either for her accomplished variety of music, or for the bold, stunning reach of her voice, are almost unapproached. With what fidelity she represents the unredeemed boorishness of environment about Nandanar! The slum, whither he has been sent by his beloved Maker, in her rendering, seems almost to swim before our eyes. Her performance of this story is, if the language will be permitted, a series of super-erogations. You cannot say where she has outdone herself more than any other place. If you should wish to point out the best at all, no task more bewildering could be self-imposed, for you are sure to have set store by well-nigh everything, ere you are yourself aware of it.

BURMA

The Rangoon Daily News, 17th November 1935 :—

What was the secret of Srimati C. Saraswati Bai's success? In the first place her versatility was responsible for this to a large extent. She has not only an extensive practical knowledge of the northern and southern systems of music, Hindi, Hindustani, Urdu, Karnatic etc., but she possesses to an amazing extent a thorough grasp of the peculiarities of verses in several languages coupled with deep knowledge of Sanskrit. She can do justice to styles of different systems she has mastered. It is said that she is the "only person who can sing each style in a masterly and impressive fashion without impairing its characteristic individuality or trenching upon the special melodic domain of the other". Other factors that have contributed to her success are she is the only and the

first Bhagavathar of her sex, and she has a voice which is peculiarly suited to her style of performance. Her voice is her greatest asset. Another valuable trait in the personality of Srimati Saraswati Bai is the fact that she puts her heart and soul into her kalakshepams and feels with intense emotion whatever she utters. She possesses an unsurpassable retentive power.

A drawback under which Sri Saraswati Bai labours is the absence of musical assistants in her performances and consequently she has to do all the singing and talking, unlike men-bhagavathars who have the advantage of being accompanied by others. Naturally the strain of such non-stop performances is great. Few have successfully attempted this difficult feat, but she has been at it for nearly 30 years.

Sri Saraswati Bai commands an established reputation and there are few in South India who have not heard of her. In Nothern India too her name is equally widely known. She has extorted the admiration and applause of people. A performance by her in Bombay won her the title of "Gayan Patu" (expert musician), which was given by the late Pandit Vishnu Digambar, then Principal of the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya. The title of "Kirtan Patu" (expert in Kirtan) was conferred on her by the late Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak as a token of his admiration of her talents. She is a recipient of numerous presents, jewels, robes and medals from Maharajas and Zamindars. She is a member of the expert committee of Madras Music Academy and has read papers on Harikatha at various music conferences. Her audiences consist of both laymen and pandits.

பர்மா நாடு—28-11-1935 :—

கடந்த சனிக்கிழமை (23-11-35) இரவு சுமார் 8-30 மணிக்கு சிதம்பர ரெட்டியார் உயர்தர பாடசாலையில் இவண் விஜயஞ்செய்துள்ள ஸ்ரீமதி சரஸ்வதிபாய் அவர்களால் "சீதா கல்யாணம்" என்ற ஹரிகதாகாலக்ஷேபம் நிகழ்த்தப்பட்டது. கடந்த 17வ யன்று ஜூப்ளி ஹாலில் இவ்வம்மையார் நடத்தின சங்கீத கச்சேரியில் எவ்வளவு தூரம் மிளிர்ந்திருந் தனரோ, அதனைவிட காலக்ஷேபமேடையில பதின்மடங்கு அதிகமாகவே விளங்கினரென்று கூறலாம். காலக்ஷேபத்தின்போது விஜயஞ்செய்தோரில் பெண்மையின் போற்றல் குன்றி யிருக்கும் இக்காலத்திலும் இப்பெண்மணியைப்போன்று காலக்ஷேபத்திலும், சங்கீதத்திலும், சமஸ்கிருதபாஷையின் தேர்ச்சியைக்கண்டு வியக்காதோர் ஒரு சிலரே யாவர். சமஸ்கிருத சுலோகங்களை சமய சந்தர்பங்களுக்கேற்க உபயோகித்தது காலக்ஷேபத்தை தனித்ததொரு சிறப்புடன் தோற்றுவித்தது. தியாகராஜ கீர்த்தனைகள் திவ்யமாகவேயிருந்தன. நகரத்தார் களுக்காக "கல்லார்க்கும் கற்றவர்க்கும்" என்ற பாட்டும், "வாழையடி வாழை" என்ற பாட்டும்

பாடியபோது சரஸ்வதிபாயின் சாரீரத்தின் சாதுர்யம் சாங்கோபாங்கமாகப் புலப்பட்டது. காலக்ஷேபத்தின் ஊடே தக்க உபகதைகளுடனும், உபமான உபமேயங்களுடனும் ஸ்பஷ்டமாக சந்தேகத்தை விளக்கினார்கள். கதையில் வரும் சம்பாஷணைகளில் குரலை மாற்றி வார்த்தை யாடியதும், அபிநயப்புகழ் அபாரமாயிருப்பதும் குறிப்பிடத்தக்கதாகும். இவ்வித ஹரிகதா காலக்ஷேபத்தில் விஜயஞ்செய்தோர் காலங் கடந்து செல்வதையும் கவனியாது இரவு 12-30 மணிவரை காத்திருக்க நேரிட்டது.

The Rangoon Daily News, 8th December 1935

A noble story nobly told and presented with an art and power that invested it with interest was the rare treat given by Srimati **Saraswati Bai** before an enthusiastic audience at the Reddiar School Hall last night. It was 'Nandanar'. From beginning to end Srimati Saraswati Bai develops almost to perfection her conception of Nandanar, and the audience was spell bound. Her devotional songs and rich voice are deservedly famous and loved in every corner of India and in "Nandanar" there is rich treasure of both with the added attraction of seeing her in a role that fits her admirably and which she performs with perfect technique of artistic talent and long experience. A power of acting all the characters in Nandanar from the part of the grand old man to the part of the stubborn Vedier, a command of Music and a grasp of essentials of characters were readily recognized when she described the various Gods of the Harijans and portrayed the characters of Nandanar's people. The fact that she puts her heart and soul into her kalakshepams was manifested when she described the meeting of Vedier and Nandanar when the latter begged the former to give him leave to go to Chidambaram to darsan the great Nataraj and when she sang her famous songs "Pitham Theliya", "Vedie reppady sollalachuthey" and 'Thillaiyambalam.' By her ready and refined wit she relieved the tensity of the story. It may be mentioned that though she has to do all the singing and talking non-stop, the public have realized that Mr. Ramamrutham, the Mirthangist is a great asset to her performance.

A Farewell Address, Rangoon, 22nd December, 1935 :—

We, the South Indian community resident in Burma, feel it our duty no less than our delight to pay our tribute to so distinguished a musician as your charming self. In you, madam, the charms of pure music have found noble fulfilment in your eloquence, your scholarship and the technical accomplishment of the great teller of tales.

It is a great temptation to multiply words in your praise—but we must at least learn the lesson of restraint which is so striking a feature of your art. Thousands have been charmed by your voice and your word; your histrionics that runs as a river in flood through song and speech, through exaltations of emotion and scintillations of humour, is a revelation of method. This address is not only an expression of our great joy at your performances in Rangoon, but also a tribute to a professional career of astonishing length and success.

One word more and it is a word of special gratification. Our women-folk for the first time have sought and found satisfying entertainment with freedom and comfort.

We hope that you will leave the shores of Burma with happy memories of us Indians overseas. May this little token of our feelings serve to keep those memories green in your mind.

CALCUTTA

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 7th October 1936 :—

The pioneer lady Bhagavathar Srimati Saraswati Bai of Madras gave a splendid display of her musical talents, inimitable power of expression and gesticulation, combined with a dignified charm of grace and repose before a distinguished gathering at the Albert Hall, on last Sunday, the 4th instant. The theme of her recital was Sita-Kalyanam (the marriage ceremony of Sita.) The artiste revealed the superb power of a story-teller and her command of language both Sanskrit and Tamil stunned the audience in awe and admiration. The music that she gave exhibited a skill testifying to her unparallelled proficiency in both the schools of Southern and Northern systems of Indian music. The impression that one carries after one has listened to the soul-stirring devotional music of this gifted artiste will, beyond all vestiges of doubt, remain ever fresh in the memory. Her attention on the day although mainly confined to the exposition of the rare gems of Southern Indian music, the bits of the North Indian system that she exhibited now and then entitle her to a position very great even among the distinguished exponents of the music of Hindustan; and we firmly believe that her exposition of the North Indian music, will be highly appreciated by the people of Bengal. Besides her exquisite control of 'Ragas', 'Laya', and 'Tala' and the exquisite melody of her divine voice, what strikes one most is the fact that she continued her recital on the day for full four hours without any break and practically without being assisted by any body else in the choir. A demonstration of its kind has in all probability not been witnessed

by the people of Bengal and it is only expected that Bengal, who has in her history never failed to appreciate the best of culture and refinement will this time come forward to show due recognition for this artiste of singular worth.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15th October 1936 :—

Gayanapatu Kirtanapatu Mrs. C. Saraswati Bai, the pioneer lady Bhagavatar and Musician of Madras gave another of her recitals at the Puddapukar Institute, Bhowanipur on Sunday, the 11th instant, before a crowded gathering of distinguished patrons, connoisseurs and critics of art and music. The theme of her recital was " Draupadimanarakshanam," based on the immortal story from the great Indian epic, the " Mahabharata," The performance, which continued for about four hours, was all along highly enjoyable and the talented lady displayed to a perfection her rare gifts and skill that entitle her to be esteemed as the greatest living exponent of " Harikatha " after the great Krishna Bhagavatar of hallowed memory.

The charming manner of her exposition and the appropriate delineation of the art of " kalakshepam " combined with her dignified dramatic representation bore the stamp of a rare type of genius that she is. The rich and colourful melody of the different tunes that she sang with consummate ease and ability in her highly-trained silvery voice enthralled her audience and steeped them in balmy repose and tranquility. Her conscious allegiance to the finer intricacies of the ' ragas ' in their respective " swaras " " melas " " angas " and " alankaras" carefully interwoven with the texture of songs in the theme of the recital served to bring about a highly enjoyable aesthetic product which kept the audience spellbound for hours. Her inimitable renderings of the " alap, ' " pallavis " and the " anupallavis " in their proper modes and embellishments and her superb execution of the niceties of " laya " amply evinced her great musical skill and justified her claim as one of the ablest representatives of Southern India Music. Her skilful representation of the different poetic emotions (" rasas ") lent a special charm to her artistic attainments.

A little improvement in the accompanying orchestra is, however, in the fitness of things essential to keep pace with the standard of music that she offers. The introduction of a " vin " or some other stringed accompaniment heightening the effect of the orchestral music as also emblematic of the Southern system will ensure our appreciation. It will be a welcome news for the Calcutta public to know that arrangements are being made for one of her special musical demonstrations when she will exhibit her talents in both Carnatic and Hindustani systems of Indian music.

BENARES

The Aj (आज) Benares, 31st October 1936 :—

सङ्गीतकोकिला श्रीमती सरस्वती देवी।

श्री भारत-माता मन्दिरके उद्घाटन समारोह लिये मंगलाचरणके प्रबन्धमें थोडी अडचन पड रही थी। समुचित गायकपर निगाह नहीं जा रही थी, अपना प्रान्त संगीतमें पिछडा हुआ तो है ही। इस प्रबन्धका कुछ भार मेरे ऊपर भी था। मैंने कई नाम सोचे थे, किन्तु उनसे मेरा सन्तोष न हो रहा था।

इस बीच एक दिन मेरे मातृ-मन्दिरकी ओर जानेका प्रसंग आया। किन्तु मार्गहीमें श्री चन्द्रभालजीके निवासके सामने हम रोक लियेगये! एक सज्जनने बतलाया कि एक कीर्तन करनेवाली आयी हैं और उनका नमूना सुननेके लिये तुम्हारी तलाश की जा रही थी। मैंने कहा—"लीजिये, मैं स्वयं पहुच गया।" किन्तु न जाने क्यों मुझे कोई श्रद्धा न हुई।

श्री भालजीने मुझे बताया कि दक्षिण भारतसे कोई कीर्तन करनेवाली आ रही हैं। थोडी देरमें वे आ पहुंची और विना किसी साजके उन्होंने गाना प्रारम्भ किया। पहिले उन्होंने सस्वर दो श्लोक गाये, जहांतक याद पडता है, श्याम कल्याणमें गाये। इसका वहां उपस्थित व्यक्तियोंपर इतना प्रभाव बडा कि सभी झूमने लगे। इनमें 'प्रसाद' जी, डाक्टर मोतीचन्द्र वा मुझ जैसे वेही लोग नहीं थे जो संगीत समझनेका दम भरते, बल्कि ऐसे महाशय भी थे जिन्होंने संगीतकी रसवत्ता की ओर बहुत कम लक्ष्य किया हैं। किन्तु श्रीमती सरस्वतीदेवीके गानमें इतना रस, इतनी अभिव्यक्ति, इतनी अकृत्रिमता, स्वरों का ऐसा चढाव उतार तथा तानोंका ऐसा ठिकानेसे व्यवहार है कि वह हठात् मनको खींच लेता है, चाहे वह समझ-दारका हो वा नासमझका।

इसके बाद उन्होंने एक पद गाया। पद मीराका था, वह तो याद नहीं किन्तु उसमें "मीराके प्रभु गिरिधर नागर" को उन्होंने इतने प्रकारसे अभिव्यक्त किया, इस 'पुकार' के साथ अभिव्यक्त किया, इतने 'दर्द' से अभिव्यक्त किया, इतने 'सुर' से अभिव्यक्त किया, कि अधिकांश सुननेवालोंकी आंखसे प्रेमाश्रुकी धार चल पडी। मैंने जीमें सोचा कि भगवान्ने उद्घाटन अवसरकी पूर्तिके लिये ही इन्हें यहां भेज दिया है। हुआ भी वैसाही—जिनलोगोंने उद्घाटन अवसरपर उनका सस्वर श्लोक पाठ सुना होगा वे अनुमान कर सकते हैं कि उनका गाना कितना ऊंचा होगा।

अस्तु। उस दिन जब वे गा चुकीं तो मैंने उनके सहचरसे उनके सम्बन्धमें विशेष जानकारी प्राप्त की। ज्ञात हुआ कि वे दक्षिण के एक उच्च ब्राह्मण कुलमें उत्पन्न हैं और वहांकी बहुतही प्रसिद्ध

कीर्तनकार हैं, हिन्दुस्तानी तथा कर्नाटक—दोनोंही संगीतोंपर उनका समान रूपसे अधिकार है। कितनेही समाजोंको उन्होंने अपनी कोकिलाविनिन्दक कण्ठ कलासे मुग्ध और आल्हादित किया है।

काशीके संगीत प्रेमियोंके लिये यह एक सौभाग्यका विषय है कि गांधर्व महाविद्यालयसे "गायन-पटु" की पदवी—केवल नामकोही नहीं अपितु सार्थक पदवी—प्राप्त सौभाग्यवती सरस्वती देवी इस समय काशी में आयी हुई हैं। सुना है, टाउनहालमें आप अपना सुललित संगीत सुनानेवाली भी हैं।

आशा है, काशी की जनता श्री सरस्वती देवीके प्रति अपनी गुणज्ञताका परिचय अवश्य देगी।

MADRAS again

The Indian Fine Arts Society, Madras, 24th December 1936 :—

Three Bhagavatars, in three ages born,
Tanjore, Payanam, Iyar, did adorn.
The first, in point of Interest, surpassed ;
In Instruction, next ; Inspiration, last.
The force of Nature could nowhere else flee ;
To make a fourth, she joined all the three.
Came, then, the very Saraswati down,
Bless'd that fourth with success her Art to crown ;
Naming her, like Self, **Saraswati Bai**,
She made her proudly learn'd, yet wisely coy.
Richly does Bai deserve-H. P. M. D—
" Har'katha-Prasang-Marga-Darsini. "
This *Title* her Madras admirers give
Today, to enjoy which, long may she live !

Mahamahopadyaya, Dr. V. Swaminathier, 25th December 1936 :—

இத்தென்னாட்டிலும், வடநாட்டிலும், அயல்நாடுகளிலுமுள்ள யாவராலும் நன்கு மதிக்கப்பெற்றும் அங்கங்கே உயர்ந்த ஸம்மானங்களையும் பட்டங்களையும் அடைந்தும் விளங்குகின்ற ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அவர்களுடைய திறமையைப்பற்றி உலகம் நன்கு அறியுமாதலால் நான் கூறுவது மிகையாகும். இவர்களுடைய கதைகளையும் சங்கீதத்தையும் ஸ்ரீ பா. இராஜராஜேசுவர ஸேதுபதி மகாராஜா அவர்களுடைய முன்னிலையிலும் சில சபைகளிலும் கேட்டு மகிழ்ந்திருக்கிறேன்.

இவர்கள் கதை செய்யும்பொழுது, இவர்கள்பாலுள்ள சங்கீதத்திறமை, வடமொழி தென்மொழி ஞானம், மகாராஷ்டிரம் முதலிய பாஷைகளிலுள்ள பயிற்சி, விஷயங்களைத் தெளிவாகச்சொல்லும் ஆற்றல் முதலியன நன்றாகப் புலப்படும். சிலவாரங்களுக்குமுன் இவர்கள் வடதேசத்திற்குச்சென்று பலவிடங்களிற் கதை முதலியன செய்து அங்குள்ளவர்களாற் பாராட்டப்பெற்றதை யாவரும் அறிவர். காசி ஸ்ரீமத்வ ஸம்பிரதாயாசார்யரவர்கள் இவர்களைச் சிலாகித்து ஆசீர்வாத பத்திரம் வழங்கியதோடு "ஸங்கீத ஸம்ஸ்கிருத வித்யாரத்நம்" என்ற பட்டப் பெயரையும் அருளியிருக்கிறார்கள். இன்னும் இப்படியே பல உயர்ந்த பட்டங்களும் ஸம்மானங்களும் பெறுவதற்கேற்ற தகுதி இவர்களுக்கு இருப்பதால் அங்ஙனமே அடைந்து சிறப்புறுவார்களென்பதில் ஐயமில்லை.

NAGORE

The Welcome Address, 21st April 1939 :—

சங்கீத சாஹித்திய சிகாமணியே :—

இப்பரத கண்டத்திற்கு திலகம்போல் விளங்கும் புண்ணிய பூமியாகிய சிவராஜதானி எனும் திருநாகபட்டணத்திலும் இப்பட்டணத்தின் வடபால் உள்ள புந்நாகவன க்ஷேத்திரமாகிய நாகூரிலும் உள்ள பக்த மகா ஜனங்களாகிய நாங்கள் தங்களை இன்று அன்புடன் வரவேற்று இப்பத்திரத்தை தங்கள்பால் சமர்ப்பிக்கின்றோம்.

தாங்கள் இந்த சங்கீத உலகை பல ஆண்டுகளாக அலங்கரித்துக்கொண்டு பற்பல இடங்களுக்கும் சென்று பக்தி மார்க்கத்தைப் பரவச்செய்து வருவது பலரும் புகழக்கூடியதே.

நம் பாரத நாட்டிற்கே தாங்கள் ஓர் திலகமாய் விளங்கிக்கொண்டும், சங்கீதத்தின் கௌரவத்தை வெளிப்படுத்திக்கொண்டும், ஆஸ்திகத்தின் அவசியத்தை வற்புறுத்திக் கொண்டும், வருவதாலேயே, தங்களுக்கு அளிக்கப்பெற்றுள்ள உயரிய பட்டங்கள் யாவும் மிகவும் பொருத்தமுடையவை என்று போற்றுதாரும் உளரோ !

கீதாச்சாரியராய் விளங்கிய ஸ்ரீமத் லெக்ஷ்மணாச்சாரியாருடையவும், அன்னாரது அன்பிற்குரியரான ஸ்ரீமத் கிருஷ்ணாசாரியாருடையவும், பிரிய சிஷ்யர் தாங்களே என்று வியந்து பேசி தங்கள் பெருமையை புகழாதார் உண்டோ !

தங்களுடைய கதையின் சங்கீத சாஹித்யங்களின் பாவ, ராக, தாளங்களின் பெருமையையும், நவரஸங்களின் பரிமளிப்பையும் கண்டே, தங்களை பல இடங்களிலும் வரவழைத்து தக்கவிருதுகளும் அளித்து அன்புடன் போற்றி ஏற்றுகிறார்கள்.

வெகுகாலமாய் தங்களுடைய சத்கதாகாலக்ஷேபங்களை இடைவிடாமல் நடத்தி வந்து, பலவித சத்ஜனங்களாலும், சங்கீத கோஷ்டிகளாலும் கொண்டாடப்பட்டு வரும் தங்களுக்கு நீண்ட ஆயுளையும், திடகாத்திரத்தையும் கொடுத்தருளவேணுமாய் எல்லாம்வல்ல இறைவனை பிரார்த்திக்கின்றோம்.

MESSAGES

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RELATING TO

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The Portrait Unveiling

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ARRANGED IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

Sachivothama Sir. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Dewan of Travancore, 20th November 1939 :—

I am glad that the Jagannatha Bhakta Sabha of Madras has decided to put up a portrait of Srimati Saraswati Bai. During the many years in which I have watched her development as a singer and Bhagavathar, I found in her not only an ever-increasing technical competence but rare gifts of exposition and presentation of her material in a popular form without infringing the laws of good taste or artistical perspective. The combination of qualities displayed by her is very rare and she has been one of the persons instrumental for the popularisation of the Kathakalakshepam which has become a notable feature of South Indian Life and I wish her and the Sabha all success and prosperity.

Isai Tamil, Sri. T. Lakshmana Pillai, B.A., Retired Major Treasury Officer, 20th November 1939 :—

I have much pleasure in listening to the Vocal music and Katha performance of Gayanapatu Kirtanapatu C. Saraswati Bai of Madras and have been much impressed with the high excellence of her performance. She is the first family lady, I believe, who had the courage to take to public Katha performance. Her equipment therefor is unquestionable. She possesses a silvery, sweet and most flexible voice, a fine knowledge of Ragas and Kirtanams, an exquisite manner of reciting verses and songs in Sanskrit, Tamil and Telugu, a close acquaintance with Hindu Puranic stories and an admirable command of elegant Tamil. It is no wonder, therefore, that with a charming address superadded to these excellent accomplishments, she has deservedly moved forward to the first rank of Katha performers, and earned a niche in the temple of Fame. May she live long and entertain the world with her high class music and brilliant Katha performances !

Sri. K. S. Chandrasekhara Aiyar, Retired Chief Judge of Mysore, Bangalore City, 21st November 1939 :—

It must be nearly a quarter of a century since I first had the pleasure of attending a Harikatha Kalakshepam by Srimati C. Saraswati Bai. The appreciation then evoked has grown with the years into an abiding admiration for her many-sided talents.

As a typical expounder of Bhagavata Kathas to a popular audience, Sri. Saraswati Bai has few equals and no superiors at the present day. Her

name and fame, well-known and wide-spread all over South India, and even in the north attract large gatherings of appreciative listeners, both men and women, wherever she is engaged.

Her expositions, combining a clear, interesting, unhesitating stream of connected narrative with a regulated flow of musical recitation and the most charming renderings of Keertanas and Slokas from an apparently inexhaustible and choice repertory, diversified by topical allusions and enlivened by flashes of wit and gentle touches of humour, are superb models of what such performances should be. The quality of the music is enhanced by the rich, resonant and melodious voice, and the finished faultless execution, satisfying to the most fastidious taste and pleasing to all.

I must not omit to mention her wonderful command of language, especially of the Tamil tongue in which her performances are generally given, as also of Sanskrit, Kannada, Telugu, Mahratti, and perhaps others as well.

Praises and medals and titles have been showered upon Srimati Saraswati Bai, who shines today as a star of the first magnitude in the firmament of Indian Music. It behoves all lovers and admirers of her art to recognize such standing brilliance in a more lasting and adequate fashion.

Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar of Chettinad, 22nd November 1939:–

I have known Lady Bhagavathar Srimati Saraswati Bai for the past about twenty-five years. I have had many opportunities of hearing her Kalakshepams and I confidently say that she is an able exponent of that essentially Indian method of disseminating useful knowledge and popularising the great truths and ideals lying imbedded in our ancient Epic and the Puranas. She is an accomplished artiste of no mean order. Gifted with a powerful, rich and melodious voice, she easily captivates the audience and forces their attention on the subject which she is expounding. If she finds interest flagging, she has her delightful light pieces in popular tunes to tone up the gathering; rounds of applause greet such songs of hers. She has had the good fortune of having Pandit Krishnachar as her Garu. It is no wonder, therefore, that her exposition is so clear and powerful. May she live long and continue to inspire the people with her soul-stirring music and fine Kalakshepams.

Sri P. R. Natesa Aiyar, Retired High Court Vakil, Tanjore, 22nd November 1939 :—

Srimati C. Saraswati Bai made her debut at a very early age at Tanjore as a Lady Bhagavathar. We then acclaimed her as a prodigy and anticipated a very bright future for her. Since then she has grown from strength to strength, attained a place in the front rank of Bhagavathars and continues to occupy the same. When I was on the Tanjore Temple Committee, a Katha performance of the Lady Bhagavathar was a regular item for many years in the celebrations of the yearly festivals in the Siva and Vishnu Temples at Nidamangalam. I have attended Kathas without number of the Lady Bhagavathar, heard, admired and enjoyed them. Everyone of her Kathas attracted a very large audience.

It is highly regrettable that the Harikatha, the object of which is to make the cult of Bhakti attractive and popular should have degenerated into low comedy in the hands of some Bhagavathars and disfigured by obscene upakathas. Srimati Saraswati Bai has in her Kathas always kept up a very high standard. Having heard at leisure and appreciated the music of the master musicians of the past from Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer downwards, I flatter myself that I have an ear for high class Carnatic music; and I have no hesitation in saying that Srimati Saraswati Bai's Carnatic music is of a very high order.

She has a magnificent voice, a Combination of the " Thrusthanaghana ghambira." Carnatic music has fallen on evil days. The music that has come to us from the two moolapurushas, Kshetrajna and Purandhara Vittal, a rich, heritage of which we should be proud, has degenerated into mere noise. Ragas which ought to be things of flesh and blood have now become skeletons and the so-called new style of music with its swaram singing is nothing but playing with skeletons. Permutations and Combinations are indulged in without any regard for melody. Present day positions are not solely responsible for this state of things. Public Taste has degenerated. It is to the credit of Srimati Saraswati Bai that hers is true Carnatic music.

She is fully equipped with a very good knowledge
of Sanskrit, Maharati, Cannada,
Telugu and Hindustani—knowledge
absolutely necessary for
Harikatha performances. She has
an admirable power of exposition.

I conclude by expressing my profound admiration for the Lady Bhagavathar's music and mastery of the art of performing Harikathas.

Diwan Bahadur C. V. Venkataramana Iyengar, B.A., B.L., F.R.S.A., **Coimbatore, 23rd November 1939:**

I am glad to learn that the Jagannatha Bhakta Sabha of Madras has decided to unveil a portrait of Srimati C. Saraswati Bai, Avl., Lady Bagavathar in recognition of her unrivalled and brilliant attainments and performances in the musical field. It should also be a matter of great satisfaction to all friends and admirers of the revered Lady Bagavathar that it also intended to publish a Commemoration Volume on the occasion of the Portrait Unveiling. I feel it a great personal honour and privilege to have my name included in the list of those who have been asked to send their messages for publication in it.

My acquaintance with the great Lady Bagavathar is about 30 years old and I remember very well the way in which she very eloquently and vigorously performed a Hari Katha in my house on the occasion of my daughter's marriage about 25 years ago, during which performance a very large audience consisting of thousands of people heard her Katha and appreciated it very much. I have had several more opportunities of listening to her performances with great delight—one of them having been on the occasion of my son's marriage at Madras about 18 years ago, when the performance was very much appreciated by thousands of people. Besides hearing her at several of her performances, I have had the pleasure of talking to various friends regarding her performances and it is no exaggeration to say that the general opinion of all people in Southern India and in those places in Northern India in which South Indians live in large numbers is that her great proficiency in music, powers of diction, knowledge of languages and the respect with which the public hear and enjoy her Harikatha Kalakshepams are of highly unrivalled character and in view chiefly of her having the advantage of a very learned guru in the person of Pundit Brimah Sri Krishnachar, her great knowledge of Sanskrit, correct pronunciation of the Sanskrit words and the opportune quotations from Sanskrit books are excellent and have made me admire her greatness much more than even in other matters. What is more, Srimati Saraswati Bai is of a pious and charitable temperament and her great devotion to the Almighty God is visible in the rapturous deliveries of her Hari Kathas and the wish and prayer of myself as it should of the thousands of all her admirers and friends throughout the country are that the great Almighty will be pleased to confer on the learned Lady Bagavathar long life and good health so that she may continue her useful divine discourses to the great benefit of thousands and thousands of her admirers.

Finally, it should be a matter of great delight and satisfaction to the learned Pundit Sriman Krishnachar that he should have had the privilege and honour of having this learned Lady Bagavathar as his pupil for some decades, especially as it is well understood and believed that the greatness of the Lady Bagavathar is in no small degree due to the very useful tution given by him, added to his inspiring presence at the performances.

Sri K. Varadachary, Chief Lecturer, Music College, Annamalai University, 24th November 1939 :—

Amongst South Indian Musicians, Srimati C. Saraswati Bai is one of the most prominent. She cannot be unknown to any ardent lover of music. The most popular lady Bhagavathar in the music world as she is, she was trained under the tutorship of Sriman Krishnachar. Her reputation is many-sided.

She is best known to us as a pioneer in performing " Kalakshepams " She was the first lady Bhagavathar to enter this sphere. Her mode of performance is singled out, marked by an unparalleled style of her own and a matchless exposition of the story. It pleases everyone and creates an eternal eagerness in his mind to hear her Kalakshepam more and more.

To speak of her voice—" Vidyadhanena thapasa, susariramavapnothi " briefly one can boldly admit that her voice is somewhat specially intended for her alone. It is a gift of heaven to possess such a never-failing voice. Her voice is high-pitched, yet melodious ; loud and grand, yet pleasing. Moreover, her voice is such as can easily pour forth a shower of " Firkas " and " curves ". One is taken to heavenly bliss when hearing music coming through such a fine voice. In short, her voice helps her to reach as a high level of merit as she now stands at.

Srimati Bai Amma's versatility is clearly recognised in her command of very many languages. Her proficiency in Canarese, Telugu, Malayalam, Tamil and English is worth mentioning. Her knowledge and scholarship in Sanskrit is highly appreciated by Vidwans of high repute. She is well-versed in Hindi and Marathi also. Her Hindustani tunes will excel anything in its field especially characterising both in her tongue and technique. This command of languages adds to her fame and places her in the top-most place among the performers of Harikathas.

The special features of her performances are still to be noted. Her Sanskrit verses in the course of the Kalakshepam increase the beauty of the performances. She is gifted with natural eloquence and sublimity in her making the audience mesmerised by her annotative flow of dignified deliverance. This is all the more pleasing and grand. Another special feature which is necessary to ensure success to a Kalakshepam is the distinctness in the pronunciation and intonation of the words. She is perfect in this art. No word in her speech passes without being clearly understood by the audience. Accentuated and crisp is her exposition and eloquent is her style. Lastly, she is well in giving out without any flaw Hindustani songs, both in Hindi and in Marathi. These features make her one of the prominent performers of Katha Kalakshepams. In the field of Katha Kalakshepams, her services are not only attractive and appreciated amongst the lovers of music, but also have given a new impetus to several new lady-Bhaghavathars of definite calibre.

In conclusion, it will not be much if I can say a few words of my personal experience. Bai Amma is known to me for more than thirty years and I never missed any of her performances, if any were programmed within my knowledge and reach. I have never seen her without a book in her hand. Srimati C. Saraswati Bai Ammal Avergal has had, from her early life a great future before her which she is rapidly realising and she has won great repute in her field. Her name will be ever remembered for several centuries.

Gayakasikhamani Sri. L. Muthiah Bhagavatar, Palace Vidwan of Mysore and Travancore, 24th November 1939 :—

ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அம்மாள் அவர்களை 1908ம் வருஷம் முதல் எனக்கு நன்றாய்த் தெரியும். ஆரம்பத்தில் இவர்கள் ஹிந்துஸ்தானி ஸங்கீதத்தை நன்றாய் அப்யஸித்து வெகு அழகாய் கேட்போர் மகிழும்படி கச்சேரி செய்து வந்தார்கள். பிறகு கதா காலக்ஷேபம் செய்ய தொடங்கிய நாள் முதல் பல பெரியோர்களையும் ஆஸ்ரயித்து வர வர பல சரித்திரங்களைக் கற்றுத்தேர்ந்து ஸம்ஸ்கிருதம், கன்னடம், மராட்டி, தெலுங்கு, தமிழ் முதலான பாஷைகளின் நுணுக்கங்களையும் அறிந்து, சிரோரத்னமாய் இப்பொழுதும் விளங்குகிறார்கள். இத்துடன் வட நாட்டில் உள்ள பெரியோர்களால் 'காயனபடு' 'கீர்த்தனபடு' என்ற விசேஷமான பட்டங்களையும், அநேகம் தங்கப்பதக்கங்களையும், பரிசாக பெற்று பிரகாசிக்கிறார்கள். இப்பொழுதும் வடநாட்டு தென்னாட்டு ஸங்கீதங்களை யாவரும் வியக்கும்படி பாடி கச்சேரி செய்கிறார்கள். இந்த ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அம்மாள் அவர்களிடம் நம் ஸங்கீத உலகத்தில் எனக்கு விசேஷ மதிப்பு உண்டு என்பதை தெரிவித்துக்கொள்கிறேன்.

Sri. T. S. Sabesier, Retired Principal, Music College, Annamalai University, 24th November, 1939 :—

ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அம்மாளை எனக்கு 36-37 வருஷகாலமாகத் தெரியும். இந்தம்மாளின் 11-12 வயதில் மைலாட்டூர் மிருதங்கம் கிருஷ்ணய்யர் என்னை அழைத்துப்போய் இந்தம்மாளின் ஸங்கீதத்தைக்கேட்பித்தார். அப்போது பாடிய இந்துஸ்தான் உருப்படி இப்போதும் என் காதிலேயே ஒலித்துக்கொண்டிருக்கிறது. சுருதிசுத்தம், லயசுத்தம், அப்போதே சுத்தமாக இருந்தது. பிறகு கர்னாடக ஸங்கீதமும் ஹரிகதா நிரூபணங்களும் கற்று பண்டித பாமர ரஞ்ஜகமாக வாக்சாதுர்யத்துடன் கதை செய்து வருவதும், ஸம்ஸ்கிருத மஹாராஷ்ட்ரபாஷா ஞானமும் விருத்தியை அடைந்து கால க்ஷேபம் செய்து வருவதும் மிகவும் மெச்சத்தகுந்தது. இந்த அம்மாளின் பெற்றோர்கள் 'ஸரஸ்வதி' என்று பெயர் வைத்திருப்பது மிகப் பொருத்தமே.

Sri. Papanasa Sivan ("P. R. Sivan") Music-Composer, 24th November, 1939 :—

காயனபடு கீர்த்தனபடு ஸ்ரீமதி C. ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அவர்கள் அதிபால்யத்திலிருந்து கதாலோகத்தில் ப்ரகாசிப்பவர்கள்; பெரிய ஸமஸ்தானங்களாலும் புகழப்பட்டவர்கள். அனேக பாஷைகளிலும் கர்னாடகம் ஹிந்துஸ்தான் இருவகை ஸங்கீதத்திலும் பயிற்சியும் தேர்ச்சியுமடைந்தவர்கள். 'ஸ்த்ரீ ஸ்வதந்த்ரம்' என்ற வார்த்தை பிறக்கும் முன்பே—ஸ்த்ரீகளின் முன்னேற்றத்திற்கு தைர்யமாகப் பாதை நிர்மாணித்தவர்கள். பண்டிதர்களும் பாமரர்களும் மெச்சிப் பரவசப்படும்படி—பகவத் குணங்களை நவரஸபரிதமாயும் திவ்ய ஸங்கீத நாதாம்ருத பூர்ணமாயும் கதை செய்துவருவது—தமிழ்ப்பாஷையறியாதவர்களுக்குக் கூடத்தெரியும்பொழுது தமிழ்நாட்டவர்க்குச் சொல்லவும்வேண்டுமோ? சற்றேறக்குறைய இருபத்தெட்டு வருஷ காலமாக ஸ்ரீமதியின் கதையைக் கேட்டனுபவிக்கும் ஒரு காரணத்தைக்கொண்டு, அவர்களைப் பற்றிச் சில குறிப்புகளை வெளியிட நானும் உரிமை கொண்டாடுகிறேன். பதினாயிரக்கணக்கான ஜனங்களை மந்திரத்தில் கட்டுப்பட்ட ஸர்பம் போலாக்கும்—ஸங்கீத ரஸமும் வாக்சாதுர்யமும் படைத்தவர்கள். ஹரிகதை செய்தவர்களுக்குள், ஸ்ரீமதி பாய், அவர்கள் வாங்கின கதைரேட் (ஸம்பாவனை) வேறெவரும் வாங்கவில்லை. இவ்வளவெல்லாமிருந்தும் கர்வம், அகம்பாவம் முதலிய துர்குணங்கள் அணுவுமில்லாதவர்கள். 'கற்றது கை மண்ணளவு, கல்லாதுலகளவு' என்ற ஆன்றோர் சொற்படி இன்றும், ஹரி கதையென்ற மங்கையை-புதுக்கல்பனைகள் நிறைந்த-ஸங்கீதம் சாஸ்த்ரார்த்தம் முதலிய ஆடையாபரணங்களைக்கொண்டு அலங்கரிப்பவர்கள். சித்த சுத்தியும், ஸத்பக்தியும், ஸச்சரித்ரமும்—அந்தக் கரணத்தில் நிறையப்பெற்றவர்கள். பெரியோர்களிடமும் கற்ற வித்வான்களிடமும் பேரன்புடையவர்கள். ஆதி முதல் சிறிதேனும் அஸூயையில்லாமலும் பெருமை பாராட்டிக்கொள்ளாமலும், எந்த ஸங்கீதத்தையும் எந்தக் கதையையும் கேட்டு ரஸிக்கும் ஸ்வபாவமுடையவர்கள். யாரிடத்தும் மாச்சர்ய மில்லாதவர்கள். என் அனுபவத்தில் ஒருவரைப் பரிஹஸித்தோ, ஒருவருடைய வித்தையையாகிலும் குற்றஞ்சொல்லியோ, கேட்டதில்லை யென்று உறுதியாகச் சொல்லுவேன். தஞ்சை ஜில்லாவிற்குள் பரம ரஸிகனாய்-பண்டிதர்களுக்கு மித்ரனாய் விளங்கி

வாழ்ந்து மறைந்த கோட்டூர் (மன்னார்குடி) சடகோப முதலியார் அவர்கள் ஒருநாள் ஸ்ரீமதியைக்குறித்து—"அந்த சாரீரமும் ஸங்கீதமுஞ் சேர்வதற்கு ஸமானமான ஒருருசியை-வேறெதிலும் அனுபவித்ததில்லை. அந்த அம்மாளின் கல்பனை பொருந்தும் கதாப்ரவசனத்திலுள்ள அவ்வளவு இன்பம் பலசாஸ்த்ர புராணங்களைக்கற்ற, மற்றப்பெரியோர்களிடமிருந்துகூட அனுபவித்ததில்லை. எனக்கு எல்லாபாகவதர்களிடமும் ஸங்கீதவித்வான்களிடமும், கௌரவ புத்தியுண்டானாலும், அந்த அம்மாளின் கதையில் தனியான மதிப்புண்டு. அதைப்பக்ஷபாதமென்று யாராவது சொன்னாலுங்கூட எனக்கு அக்கரையில்லை"—என்று என்னிடம் சொன்னது இன்று போல ஞாபகத்திற்கு வருகிறது. இந்த அம்மாளுடைய ஸகல ச்ரேயஸ்ஸிற்கும் காரணபூதர்களான-ப்ரஹ்மஸ்ரீ க்ருஷ்ணசார் அவர்களுக்கும் நமது நன்றி உரித்தாகும். இந்த குரு சிஷ்யர்கள்—இன்னும் பன்னெடுநாள் அமோகத்ருட காத்ரர்களாய் ஸுக ஜீவிகளாயிருந்து, பகவத் குணப்ரவசனத்திற்கும், நிஜமான ஸங்கீதத்திற்கும்-பூர்ணமாய் தொண்டு செய்ய வேண்டுமென்று ஆண்டவனை மனமாரப்ப்ரார்த்திக்கிறேன்.

Sri. Veena Sambasiva Iyer of Karaikudi, 25th November, 1939 :—

ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அம்மாள் அவர்கள் கதா காலக்ஷேபம் செய்ய ஆரம்பித்த காலம் முதல் அவர்கள் காலக்ஷேபங்களை பல முறை கேட்டு மகிழ்ந்திருக்கிறேன்.

அவர்களின் பாஷாஞ்ஞானமும் வாக்ஸ்பஷ்டமும், சுத்தமான சங்கீத ஞானமும், யாவராலும் போற்றத்தகுந்தவை.

அவர்களுடைய சாரீரம் தென் இந்திய வட இந்திய, சங்கீதம் இரண்டிற்கும் பொருந்தினதாகவும், நளினமாகவுமிருக்கிறது.

அவர்கள் நீடூழிகால மிருந்து சங்கீத கலையை அபிவிருத்தி செய்து கொண்டிருக்கும்படி சர்வேசுவரன் அவர்களுக்கு கிருபை செய்வாராக.

Dr. U. Rama Rao, President Legislative Council, Madras, 26th November 1939 :—

Srimati C. Saraswati Bai, has been a musician and a performer of Harikatha Kalakshepams for the last 30 years. Even from her girlhood, she had a great aptitude for music, having been born with a sweet and enchanting voice. I heard her when she was a young girl of 14. Even then, her voice was sweet and melodious. After some years, she developed herself into a performer of Harikatha Kalakshepams. She always has great resources and performs the Kalakshepams with great zeal and enthusiasm. From the beginning to the end of the kalakshepams, she never faulters for words and holds the audience in spell-bound. The value of her kalakshepams is considerably enhanced by her sweet music. She could sing with proficiency in Karnatak, and Hindu-

stani music. She knows songs in Tamil, Telugu, Hindustani, Marathi, and. Canarese. Her rendering of Sanskrit slokas in different tunes is marvellous. She has toured all over India and has acquired an All India fame. Her Kalakshepams attract thousands of people. I wish her long life and continued prosperity.

Sri. M. G. Gopalakrishna Aiyar, Violinist, Marungapuri Samastana Vidwan, 26th November, 1939 :–

ஸ்ரீகாயனபடு, கீர்த்தனபடு, ஸங்கீதரத்ன, கீர்த்தன கண்டீரவ, ஸங்கீத ஸம்ஸ்க்ருத வித்யா ரத்ன, ஸ்ரீ ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் லேடி பாகவதர் அவர்களுக்கு

அநந்த நமஸ்காரம். இப்பவும் எழும்பூர் ஜகந்நாத பக்த சபையில், உருவப் படத்தை வைக்கப்போவதாகத் தெரிந்து பரம சந்தோஷம் அடைந்தேன்.

நமது முன்னோர்களாகிய கனம் திருக்கோடிகாவல் கிருஷ்ணய்யர் அவர்கள், கனம் கோவிந்தசாமி பிள்ளை அவர்கள் ஸ்ரீ அம்மாள் அவர்களின் அகோசரமான ஸங்கீதத்தின் புத்தி வன்மையை சிலாகித்துப் புகழ்ந்து பேசியதை பன் முறை கேட்டிருக்கிறேன்.

ஸ்ரீ கோவிந்தசாமி பிள்ளை அவர்களும் நானும் ஸ்ரீ அம்மாள் அவர்களின் ஸங்கீதத்தை முதன் முதல் கேட்கவந்தோம். அந்த சமயம் ஸ்ரீ அம்மாள் அவர்கள் கர்நாடகமும் ஹிந்துஸ்தானியும் பாடினார்கள். பிள்ளை அவர்கள் ரொம்பவும் பரமாநந்தப்பட்டு உடனே ஓர் சால்வையை ஸன்மானித்து ரொம்பவும் சந்தோஷப்பட்டார்கள். அதன் பின் ஓர் சமயம் திருச்சி கிருஷ்ணகான சபையில் ஓர் கதை ஸ்ரீ அம்மாள் அவர்கள் செய்யும்போது ரத்னங்கள் இழைத்த ஒரு தோடா வெகுமதி அளித்தார்கள். ஸ்ரீ அம்மாள் அவர்களின் ஞானத்தைப்பற்றி ஸங்கீத அம்சத்திலோ, கதை பண்ணும் திறமையிலோ 'ஸ்ரீ அம்மாளுக்கு சமானம் அம்மாளே' என்று பிள்ளை அவர்கள் சொல்வார்கள்.

சாரீர அம்சம்

த்ருஸ்தாயி பேசக்கூடியதும் ஸம்பூர்ணமான உணர்வை உண்டாக்கக் கூடியதுமாய் தசவித கமகங்களுடன் அமைந்திருக்கிறது. தாரஸ்தாயில் அஸாதாரணமாய் பிருகாக்கள் பரம சுலபமாய் பேசும். மூன்றுஸ்தாயிகளிலும் கனநயங்களுடன் பரம சுத்தமாய் பேசக் கூடிய ஸ்வபாவமுடையது.

ஸங்கீதம்

ஸ்ரீ அம்மாள் அவர்களின் ஸங்கீதத்தில் மூன்று பிரிவுகள். அதில் (1) கர்நாடகம் (2) இந்துஸ்தானி (3) கதை சம்பந்தமான நிரூபணங்கள் இந்த மூன்று அம்சங்களையும் கேட்கும்போது ஒவ்வொன்றிலும் பூர்ணபாண்டித்யத்தை அடைந்த பனோபாவத்தை கேட்கிறவர்களுக்கு உண்டுபண்ணும்.

ஸ்ரீ அம்மாள் அவர்கள் ஸங்கீத வித்வான்களிடத்தில் கீர்த்தனங்கள் பாடம் பண்ணுவதுண்டு. அதை யாரிடத்தில் எவ்விதம் பாடம் பண்ணினார்களோ அதே விதமாய் பாடி தனது ஸ்வபாவமான ஞானத்தை சேர்த்து விடுவார்கள். அத்தருணங்களில் நமக்கு ஸ்ரீ அம்மாள் அவர்கள் 'ஏக சந்த க்ராஹி' என்றே தோன்றும்.

நான் ஸ்ரீரங்கத்தில் நடத்தும் ஸ்ரீ த்யாகராஜ ஸ்வாமிகளின் உத்ஸவத்தில் ஒருமுறை ஸ்ரீ அம்மாள் கதை செய்யும் பாக்யத்தைப் பெற்றேன். நான்குமணி நேரம் கதை நடந்தது. ஆயிரக்கணக்கான ஜனங்கள், ஸ்திரீகள், குழந்தைகள் நிசப்தமாயிருக்கும்படி கதை செய்தார்கள். இன்றைக்கும் என்றைக்கும் நினைக்கும்போதெல்லாம் கதை நடக்கிறது போலவே தோன்றிக்கொண்டிருக்கிறது.

கதாஸம்பந்தம்

ப்ரவசன ஸமயத்தில் எந்த சந்தர்ப்பத்தை சொல்லுகிறார்களோ அதில் நவரஸ பாவங்களில் எந்த எந்த பாவம் எது எதற்கு பொருத்தமோ அந்தந்த பாவங்கள் அதில் பொங்கிததும்பி நிற்கும்.

கேட்போருக்கு கதை செய்தால் இப்படித்தான் செய்யவேண்டுமென்றே தோன்றும்.

ஸ்ரீ அம்மாள் அவர்களுக்கு ஓர் தனிப்பெருமை ஈசனருளால் கிடைத்திருக்கிறது. நமது இந்தியாவில் படிப்பில் கரைகண்டவர்கள், மஹா ராஜாக்கள், தேசத்யாஹிகள் முதலியவர்கள் எல்லாரிடமும் கதைசெய்து, பாடி, அவர்கள் பரவசப்பட்டு ஸன்மானித்திருக்கிறார்கள். அதில் ஸ்ரீ பாலகங்காதர திலகர், காசி ஸ்வாமிகள், ஹைதராபாத் நவாப், மைசூர் மஹாராஜா அவர்கள் முக்யமானவர்கள். ஹைதராபாத்தில், நவாப் ஸமஸ்தான வித்வானால் நவாபின் பேரில் செய்த ஸாஹித்யத்தை அம்மாள் அவர்கள் பாடம் பண்ணி நவாபிடம் பாடி பரம சந்தோஷம் அடையச்செய்து யதேஷ்டமான ஸம்பாவனைகளைப்பெற்றார்கள். மைசூர் மஹாராஜா அவர்கள் ஹரிகதை கேட்பதில்லை. ஸ்ரீ அம்மாள் அவர்களிடம் மட்டும்தான் கதை கேட்டு ஆயிரக்கணக்கான ரூபாயும் ஸன்மானங்களும் கொடுத்தார்கள்.

Dewan Bahadur Sri T. Rangachariar, C.I.E. **Madras, 27th Nov. 1939 :—**

It is with great pleasure that I associate myself with the splendid chorus of well-merited tributes paid to Srimati Saraswati Bai. An intrepid pioneer who fathomed the unknown deep, when "Kalakshepam" was yet a far-off, unexplored region, she started on her remarkable career also at a time when our Society had not learnt to look on such paths of service with kindly eyes. I recall with pride and delight, what was perhaps her maiden performance under the auspices of the Egmore Ladies' Recreation Club with which members of my family were closely connected. I have no hesitation in saying that the promise of these years has been more than amply fulfilled, so much so the name of Srimathi Saraswathi Bai is today a household name in the realm of music and "Kalakshepam".

Equally at home in almost everyone of the South Indian languages, possessed of a great culture and deep insight into our ancient literature—thanks to the unremitting, selfless labours of her revered preceptor, Sri Krishnacharya, and with a melodious voice matched to her unflagging zeal and energy, her telling exposition and marvellous powers of singing have reverberated throughout the country, not to speak of distant Burma, Ceylon and other places, for the last thirty years.

Her versatile genius has had its recognition in due measure all along a feature that is so pleasant to dwell upon, seeing that talents often languish in neglect and obscurity in our land. Perhaps she is the first of our musicians to be honoured with a number of titles from the north.

Lut us hope that her great example will stimulate and inspire rising generations to attain her level of eminenee in the field of art.

Sri T. S. Natesa Sastri, Advocate, Madras, 27th Nov. 1939 :—

I feel exceedingly happy to see that the citizens of Madras have come forward to show public honour to Gayana Patu, Kirtana Patu, Sangita Ratna Sreemati C. Saraswati Bai, the prima donna among the lady Bhagavathars of South India, by putting up a portrait of hers at the Jagannatha Baktha Sabha, Egmore. It was no easy thing thirty years ago for a lady, however distinguished, to enter on a career, which had been almost the close preserve of the Masculine sex. Even if she dared to intrude into the forbidden domain, it was well nigh impossible for her to earn a conspicuous place among the galaxy of Baghavathars that held the field. That Srimati Saraswati Bai has been able to accomplish both is a testimony to her intrinsic worth and to the unique gifts with which she has been endowed.

To me it is a matter of peculiar satisfaction that my late lamented brother, Brahmasri Tiruppayanam Panchapakesa Sastriar, was one of the earliest to recognise the lady's talents when they were in bud. For my part, I have been attending her performances almost from the beginning of her career and can speak about her with firsthand knowledge. Her musical talents, her ringing voice, her devotional fervour, the range of her cultural equipment and her gift of speech have all contributed to her great success and popularity. It is no wonder she has been literally loaded with titles and medals by numerous associations and distinguished public men, both in Southern and Northern India. It is only fitting that our own province should do honour to one of us, who has

attained an All India fame. In this connection, I cannot but fail to mention Brahmasri Tiruvadi Krishnachariar, her Guru, to whom she owes a great deal and but for whose tutorage and training and watchful guidance she could not have had such phenomenal rise. He gave up his Sanskrit teachership in the Madras Christian College and did much spade work for her and made her upbringing and welfare his life-work. He is fortunately still with her.

I give her my sincere blessings and pray that she may live long and win fresh laurels.

Pandit S. Subrahmanya Sastri of Tanjore, Adyar 27th November 1939 :—

अभिनवमणिमाला

सरिगमपधनिविभिन्नै रसस्रुतिं तन्वती स्वैररुत्थै : ।
स्वकरधृतामिव कामपि तीव्रतया पुष्णती सती जयति ॥ १ ॥

गायनपटुरिति कीर्तनपटुरिति संगीतरत्नमित्यपि च ।
अथ संगीतकसंस्कृतविद्यारत्नमिति बिरुदविदिता ऽसौ ॥ २ ॥

कीर्तनकण्ठीरवतामपि धत्ते स्वयमहो नु वनिता ऽपि ।
वेदात्मना ऽथ वा का ऽप्याधत्ते ताण्डवं विधेरास्ये ॥ ३ ॥

श्रुत्वा यत्कण्ठरवं परभृतवनिता नितान्तसंकुचिता ।
कोणे क्वचित्कदाचन कथमपि सूचयति हन्त निजसत्ताम् ॥ ४ ॥

भगवत्कथाऽनुकीर्तनसमयोचितगीतिवचनरचनाभिः ।
सभ्यानदभ्रधिषणानपि विवशांस्तन्मयांश्च तनुते ऽसौ ॥ ५ ॥

इतरवचःसंदर्भैरात्मंभरयः परःशताः सन्ति ।
आत्मन्युन्मेषजुषो मेधाविन ईदृशाः पुनर्विरलाः ॥ ६ ॥

तत्तदनुभूतिहृद्यं परिवेषयतीह दाक्षिणात्यानाम् ।
नवनीतं स्वोन्नीतं संगीताब्धेस्तथौत्तराहाणाम् ॥ ७ ॥

प्रतिहायनमपि मद्रे संगीतविमर्शकाः खलु मिलन्ति ।
तेषां पुरः पुनः पुनरधिकालक्षेपमियमुपन्यास्थत् ॥ ८ ॥

तत्रापुनरुक्ताः खलु तर्का अप्यनुगुणाः परं प्रत्नाः ।
न वचःप्रयुक्तिदोषो न च रसभङ्गो ऽत्र नाप्यमर्यादा ॥ ९ ॥

स्त्रीप्रकृतिरियं पुंसः कथमतिशेते क वा वयं याम ।
इति कर्तव्यविमूढा ईर्ष्याशरणा वयं स्वयं मूकाः ॥ १० ॥
गान्धर्वकलाकुशला प्रथिता नाम्ना सरस्वती सेयम् ।
विधिमुखवनिताकृपया जीयादाचन्द्रतारकमवन्याम् ॥ ११ ॥

Mahamahopadhyaya Sri M.V. Ramanujacharya, Editor of Tamil Mahabharata 27th November 1939 :—

ஸ்ரீமதி. காயனபடு, கீர்த்தனபடு, ஸங்கீதரத்தின, கீர்த்தனகண்டீரவ, ஸங்கீத ஸம்ஸ்கிருத வித்யாரத்தின, C. ஸரஸ்வதி பாய் அவர்கள் ஸங்கீத உலகிலும் கதக ஸமூகத்திலும் பெரும் புகழ் படைத்தவர்கள். தென்னாட்டிலும் தென்னாட்டு மக்கள் வாழும் பிற நாடுகளிலும் அவர்களுடைய புகழ் பரவாத இடம் இராது.

"ஆர்த்த சபை நூற்றொருவர், ஆயிரத்தொன்றும் புலவர், வார்த்தை பதினாயிரத்தொருவர்" என்பர் மேலோர். கதைசெய்தலென்பது குறித்தகாலத்திற்குள், கேட்போர் பலரும் விரும்பி ஏற்கும்படி ஸங்கீதம், ஸாஹித்யம், பேச்சு முதலியவற்றால் ஒரு விஷயத்தை விளக்கி விரித்துக்கூறிச் சிறந்த நீதியையோ தர்மத்தையோ பிரசாரம் செய்வதாகும். இத்துறையில் வெற்றி பெருவது எல்லார்க்கும் எளிதன்று என்பது மேற்காட்டிய செய்யுளடிகளால் விளங்கும்.

ஸ்ரீமதி பாய் அவர்களுக்கு இத்துறையில் அமைந்திருக்கும் யோக்யதை மிக ஆச்சரியமானது. கதை செய்பவர்களுக்கு இருக்கவேண்டிய—பல பாஷைகளில் பாண்டியத்தியம், சொல்லுந்திறமை, சாரீர நயம், சங்கித சாஸ்திர ஞானம், பாடும் பாணி, சமயோசிதமான சாதுர்யப் பேச்சு முதலிய எல்லாக்குணங்களும் பாய் அவர்களிடம் நன்கு பொருந்தியிருக்கின்றன.

முற்காலத்தில் கதை செய்பவர்களுக்குப் பிரவசன சக்தியிருந்தால் போதும். இக்காலத்தில் அப்படி யில்லை. பொதுஜனங்கள், ராக ஆலாபனம், துக்கடா முதலியவற்றோடு சிறந்த கீர்த்தனங்களையும் காலத்திற்கு ஏற்ற தேசியப் பாடல்களையும் கதை செய்பவர் முகமாகக் கேட்க விரும்புகின்றார்கள். இத்துறைகளில் நற்பெயரெடுக்கவேண்டுமானால் ஆழ்ந்த சங்கீத ஞானமும் மூன்று ஸ்தாயிகளிலும் அநாயாஸமாக ஸஞ்சாரம் பண்ணும்படியான சாரீரமும் சிறந்த பழக்கமும் வேண்டும். பாய் அவர்கள் மேல்ஸ்தாயியில் பாடும்போது, அவர்களுடைய சாரீரம் கேட்போரைத் தன்வசப்படுத்தும் வண்ணம் இன்னோசையுடன் சிறிதும் சிரமமில்லாமல் ஸஞ்சாரம் செய்யும்.

நான், ஸ்ரீமதி பாய் அவர்களின் கதையைச் சுமார் முப்பது வருஷகாலமாகப் பல முறை கேட்டிருக்கிறேன். ஒவ்வொரு முறையிலும், முன்னர்க் கேட்டதிலும் சிறந்துளது என்று கருதிய வண்ணமே கேட்கிறேன். அக்காலங்களில் நான் அடைந்த ஆனந்தத்திற்கு ஓர் எல்லையில்லை. நான் என்வசமிழந்து அவர்களின் இசைவசவான ஸந்தர்ப்பங்கள் பல

உண்டு. அக்காலங்களிலெல்லாம், "யோகாப்யாஸத்தில் ஸித்திபெற்றவர்கள் தங்கள் தங்களுடைய பயிற்சிக்குத் தக்கபடி தாம்தாம் கருதிய பொருளோடு தம்மை மறந்தும் லயித்துவிடுகிறார்கள்," என்று கூறப்படுவதின் உண்மை எனக்கு விளங்கும். சாதாரணமாகக் கதை செய்பவர்களுக்கு இருக்கவேண்டிய சங்கீத ஞானத்தைக் காட்டிலும் மிகச்சிறந்த சங்கீத வித்வான்களுக்கு இருக்கவேண்டிய அளவுக்குப் பாய் அவர்கள் ஸங்கீத ஞானத்தைப் பெற்றுச் சுவாதீனப்படுத்தியிருப்பதே இதற்குக் காரணம்.

ஸ்ரீமதி பாய் அவர்களுடைய சங்கீதத்தின் விசேஷத்தைப்பற்றிச் சிறந்த சங்கீத வித்வான்களே வாயாரப் புகழ்ந்து பாராட்டியதை நான் பல முறை கேட்டிருக்கிறேன். இவர்களுடைய சங்கீத ஞானத்தைச் சிறப்பிப்பதற்கு இதனினும் வேறு என்னவேண்டும்?

சங்கீதக் கச்சேரிகளில் சபையோர் விரும்புகிற அளவு இசைத்துறையில் தமது சாமர்த்தியத்தைக் காட்டுவதே ஒரு சங்கீத வித்வானுக்குப் போதுமானது. ஆனால், கதை செய்வது அப்படியன்று. கதை செய்பவர், ஆரம்பமுதல் மங்களம் பாடும் வரையில் பல வகைகளினால்—ஏன், நவரஸபாவங்களினாலும்—கேட்போரைத் தம்வசப்படுத்த முயலவேண்டும். இன்றேல், அவர் கேட்போரால் மதிக்கப்படமாட்டார். ஸ்ரீமதி பாய் அவர்களின் இயற்கை ஈசுவர கிருபையால் வேறுவிதமாகவே அமைந்துள்ளது. காரணம், பாஷா ஞானமும், உச்சரிப்புத்திறனும், பொருளுணர்ச்சிகெடாது சொல்லும் முறையும், விளக்கி உரைக்கும் சக்தியும், சமயோசிதமாகவும் எடுத்துக்கொண்ட விஷயத்திற்கேற்பவும் தாம் சொல்லுவதைப் பொருத்திக்கூறும் பேராற்றலும், பல பாஷைவல்லுனர்களும் மெச்சும்படியாக அவர்களிடம் அமைந்துள்ளன என்பது.

ஸகல ஞானத்திற்கும் அதிதேவதையாகிய ஸரஸ்வதிதேவி வீணையைத் தரித்திருப்பதாக வருணிக்கப்படுகிறாள். சங்கீதத் துறையில் வாய்ப்பாட்டே முதலிடம் பெறுவது. வீணை முதலிய பலவும் துணைக்கருவிகளே. அவை, பாடுவோர்க்குப் பக்கவாத்யங்களாக அமைந்து பயன்படுவனவே. ஸ்ரீமதி பாய் அவர்கள் சங்கீத வகைகளுள் சிறந்த வாய்ப்பாட்டிலும் மேம்பட்டு விளங்குவது, 'வாயாற்பாடவில்லை' என்று தனக்கிருந்த ஒரு குறையை நீக்கிக்கொள்வதற்காக ஸகலகலாவல்லியாகிய அந்த ஸரஸ்வதி தேவியே ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதி பாய் என்ற பெயருடன் தோன்றி அதற்கேற்ப இனிய சாரீரத்தையும் நல்ல பயிற்சியையும் ஞானத்தையும் பெற்றுச் சங்கீத ஸாஹித்ய உலகைச் சிறப்பிக்கிறாள் என்று புனைந்துரை வகையால் கூறுவது மிகையாகாது.

ஸ்ரீமதி பாய் அவர்கள் தாம்கருதியவாறே எல்லா நலன்களையும் பெற்று நெடுங்காலம் வாழும்படி அருள் புரியவேண்டுமென்று எல்லாவல்ல ஸர்வேசுவரனை ப்ரார்த்திக்கிறேன்.

Sir. P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer, Retired Member of the Executive Council, Govt. of Madras, 29th November 1939 :—

It is a great pleasure to me to pay my *tribute of appreciation* to Srimati Saraswati Bai, the well-known Lady Bhagavatar and musician of South India. The reputation she has for long enjoyed renders it superfluous for me to express my admiration of her talents. The beautiful voice with which she has been endowed by nature has been cultivated to great advantage; and her performances have won the high appreciation of connoisseurs. Among her other accomplishments is her knowledge of Sanskrit; and her enunciation is worthy of high praise. Not many Bhagavatars possess a good knowledge of Sanskrit, and it is a pity that the Bhagavatars of these days are not able to quote appropriate Slokas from the treasures of Sanskrit literature, sacred and devotional. Srimati Saraswati Bai has acquired a mastery of the style of narration of Harikathas. I hope she will long continue to charm the public and retain a high place among the Bhagavatars of South India.

Sri. K. Srinivasan, Managing Editor of the Hindu, Madras, 29th November 1939 :—

I have great pleasure in expressing my appreciation of the part played by Srimati C. Saraswati Bai in the cultivation and preservation of Carnatic music in South India. She is deservedly popular for her Harikatha Kalakshepams: but I personally value more her musical renderings of the Krithis and her alapanas of ragas which very often reach a high degree of excellence. She is an ardent lover of the fine arts and is ever ready to learn and improve her knowledge of music by constant practice and by listening to really high class musicians, whenever possible. She is gifted with a sweet voice with a good range; and I have heard competent critics testify to her proficiency in laya.

May God endow her with robust health and an ever increasing profiiciency in Carnatic music.

Rao Bahadur Sri. C. Tadulingam I.A.S., Retired Principal, Agricultural College, Coimbatore, & Councillor, Corporation of Madras, 29th November 1939 :—

I have known Srimati C. Saraswati Bai from her childhood; and ever since, she has been a resident of Veeraraghava Mudali Street, Triplicane. She had great aptitude for music even in her earlier years and her parents spared no pains in giving her the necessary tution. Music is a great art in South India and she is one of those who contributed to its development. She is the first Lady Bhagavathar in this part of the country and her favourite subject at the begining

was the famous 'Nandanar'. She has been making extensive tours in South India and occasionally also in North India, Ceylon and Burma. I had many opportunities to witness her performances whenever she visited Coimbatore during my stay there. In North India she proved herself an expert even in the North Indian tune. She is very popular, simple, unassuming and unostentatious. Her voice is melodious, her music exquisite, action superb and performance masterly and she has won the admiration of all lovers of music. Gayana Patu, Kirtana Patu and other titles were conferred upon her in recognition of her proficiency in music. May God grant her many more years of useful service to the Music World!

Venugana Siromani, Venugana Sarvabhowma, Palladam Sri. Sanjivi Row, 29th November, 1939 :—

காயகபடு கீர்த்தனபடு ஸ்ரீமதி C. ஸரஸ்வதிபாயம்மாளை நான் 30 வருஷங்களுக்கு மேலாகவே அறிவேன். அவருடைய 11 அல்லது 12-வது வயதிலேயே பரமசுத்தமாய் கர்நாடக ஸங்கீதத்தையும், எல்லோரும் வியக்கும்படி ஹிந்துஸ்தானி ஸங்கீதத்தையும் பாடுவார். அப்படி பாடியதை நான் பல தடவைகளில் என் சிநேகிதர் மிருதங்கம் வித்வான் மைலாட்டூர் கிருஷ்ணய்யர் முகாந்திரம், ஸ்ரீஸபேசய்யர், பிடில் ஜீ. கோவிந்தஸாமி பிள்ளை, ஸ்ரீ கோனேரிராஜ புரம் வைத்திநாதய்யர், ஸ்ரீ கடவாத்தியம் கிருஷ்ணய்யர் அவர்களோடு சேர்ந்து கேட்டிருக் கிறேன். மற்றொரு ஸமயம் தஞ்சாவூர் ஸ்ரீ பஞ்சாபகேச பாகவதரோடு ஸங்கீதம் கேட்கநேர்ந்த பொழுது, கதாநிரூபணத்தையும் எனது ஸ்நேகிதர் ஸ்ரீ கிருஷ்ணாசார் மூலம் கற்று வருகிறார் என்றறிந்து, "கருடகர்வபங்கம்" கதையில் கொஞ்சம் வரையில் கேட்டு நாங்களிருவரும் மிகவும் ஆச்சரியமடைந்தோம். அதற்கு ஸமீபகாலத்திலேயே கதையை பகிரங்கமாய் செய்யவும் ஆரம் பித்துவிட்டார். ஒரு சிறுபெண் கதை செய்வது ஆச்சரியமாயிருந்தாலும், அவ்வப்போது தன் கியாதி குன்றாமல் அபிவிருத்தியடையப்போதுமான ஸங்கீதங்களையும், ஸாஹித்யங்களை யும், பலபாஷைகளில் பாண்டித்யத்தையும் தன் குருமுகமாய் இடைவிடாமல் ஸம்பாதித்து வந்ததால், ஆரம்பகாலம் முதல் நாளது வரையிலும் 30 வருஷத்திற்கு மேலாகவே ஜனங்களின் ஆதரவும், கியாதியும், அதற்குத்தகுந்த தோடா மெடல் சால்வை முதலிய பரிசுகளும் பிருது களும் கிடைத்துவருகின்றன. அந்த அம்மாள் கதைக்காரம்பித்தகாலம் மஹா கியாதிபெற்ற பல பாகவதர்களும் பல ஸங்கீத வித்வான்களும் நிறைந்திருந்த ஸமயம். அச்சமயத்திலேயே தொழில் எல்லோருக்கும் மேலாகவே நடந்துவந்தது. அதற்கு காரணமும் இல்லாமல் போகவில்லை. நல்ல கனநய சாரீரம், சுருதி சுத்தம், லயக்கச்சிதம், நல்ல பாணி, எந்த பாஷையிலும் வாக் சுத்தி, சொல்லும் திறமை இதோடு கர்நாடகம், ஹிந்துஸ்தானி இருவகை ஸங்கீத ஞானம், இதுவுமன்னியில் இடைவிடாமல் குருமுகமாய் கற்றுவருவது, விசேஷமாய் இதர அஸாத்யமான ஸம்ஸ்கிருத ஞானம், எல்லாம் சேர்ந்து கதை மேன்மையாயிருக்கவும், ஜனங்களின் விசேஷ ஆதரவைப் பெறவும் காரணமாயிருந்தது என்று சொல்லுவதற்கு ஆக்ஷேபமேயில்லை. ஆகையால் இவர் இன்னும் சிரஞ்ஜீவியாயிருந்து, கதைகளையும் இன்னும் விசேஷமாய் செய்துகொண்டிருக்க ஸ்ரீ ஸர்வேசுவரனைப்பிரார்த்தித்து, நான் மனப்பூர்வகமாய் ஆசீர்வதிக்கிறேன்.

Sri. P. V. Raghunatha Aiyar, B.A., B.L. Retired Judge, Pudukotta, 29th November, 1939 :—

Gayanapatu, Keertanapatu, Srimati C. Saraswati Bai requires no introduction. It is not given to many to have portraits unveiled before their eyes. I congratulate Srimati Bai on this unique feature. That she is deserving of such a monument goes without saying. Her natural gifts, her acquired talents, and her vast experience in the field of music, have gained for her undying name and fame as a matchless lady Baghavathar. The great musical critic, the late C. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, has certified that Srimati Bai is the most talented lady Baghavathar. The late lamented Maha Katha Kanteerava T. S. Chidambara Baghavathar of Agaramangudi, would acknowledge merit only in Srimati Bai.

Sri. R. Narayana Aiyar, I.C.S., (Retd), Kilpauk, Madras, 29th November 1939 :—

SRIMATI SARASWATI BAI as our pioneer LADY BHAGAVATAR has won for herself a unique position in the India of the Twentieth Century.

Gifted with a rare voice she has trained it into such a wonderful instrument that she is as much at home in the Northern as she is in the Southern style of music, and she has captivated audiences all over India with her singing.

Her knowledge of SANSKRIT is a great asset to her in the popular exposition of the more abstruse philosophical and devotional parts of her discourses ; her enunciation, if I may say so, is impeccable.

Thanks to the assiduous and devoted labours of her revered preceptor PANDIT SRI KRISHNACHAR, she has a large revered repertory of KATHAS illustrative of our ancient SANATANADHARMA. Her powers of memory are an envy to the scholar.

Above all, SRI SARASWATI BAI has hit the popular taste exactly, and the delightful style of her HARIKATHAS, which have held her hearers spell-bound for hours, is marked by a refinement which I venture to think has raised the standard of the taste for devotional entertainments of this character.

SRI SARASWATI BAI has a secure place in the affections of this generation as I am sure she has in the history of our religious revival.

·Mrs. Visalakshi Narayana Aiyar, M.B.E. Kilpauk, Madras, 29th November 1939 :—

SRIMATI SARASWATI BAI with her wonted kindness and generosity gave a HARIKATHA performance in aid of the TANJORE LADIES' WAR FUND of which I was President during the Great War, and with unprecedented success.

Having attended many of her charming entertainments, I should like to say what great admiration her Indian sisters have for her wonderful talents.

Malavarayenthel Sri. Subaramier, 29th November 1939 :—

எனக்கு சுமார் 30 வருஷ காலங்களாக ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அம்மாளவர்களைத் தெரியும். அந்த அம்மாள் நடத்தும் கதா காலக்ஷேபங்களையும் வேண்டிய வரையில் நல்லஸதஸு களிலெல்லாம் கேட்டனுபவித்து இருக்கிறேன். ஒவ்வொரு தடவையிலும், அபிவிருத்தியாகவே பண்டித பாமர ரஸிகமாய் இருந்திருப்பதை தவிர, வேறு எதுவும் குறை கூற இடமில்லை.

மேலும் ஸதஸில் நிர்வகிக்கும் சக்தியானது புருஷ நிர்வாகமாகவேதான் இருக்குமே யன்றி ஸ்திரீ ஜாதியின் கதைதானே என்று யாரும் அலக்ஷியமாக நினைக்க ஹேதுவில்லை.
ஏன் என்றால் காலக்ஷேபம் நடக்கும்போது பாடுவதானாலும் ஸரி, பேசுவதானாலும் ஸரி மிகவும் வினயத்துடன் விஷயத்துடனுமிருக்குமே யல்லாது கேவலம் சிட்டாவாக யெழுதிப்பாடம் பண்ணி ஒப்புவிக்கும் வகைபோலிராது.

இதற்குக்காரணம் கதா காலக்ஷேபத்திற்கு வேண்டிய முக்கிய அம்சம் ப்ரவசனம். ப்ரவசனத்துக்கு முக்கியமான அம்சம் பாஷா ஞானம். இதோடு ஸங்கீதம். இந்த மூன்று வகைகளிலும் அம்மாளவர்கள் சிரத்தையோடு உழைப்பது ஒன்று. அதிலும் அம்மாளவர்களுக்கு ஸங்கீதத்திலும் விசேஷ அபிமானம் உன்டென்பது கதாகாலக்ஷேபங்களில் பாடும் ஒவ்வொரு உருப்படியும், ஸ்லோகமும், விருத்தமும் இராகங்களில் கொடுத்து பாவஸ்புரிதமாயும், விஸ்தாரமாயும் அழுத்தமாயும் பண்டித பாமர ரஸிகமாய்ப் பாடுவதிலிருந்தே எவரும் தெளிவாய் அறிந்துகொள்ளக்கூடியதே.

இதில் என் அனுபவகாலத்தில் ஸ்ரீமதி அம்மாளவர்கள் காலக்ஷேபங்களை கேட்டும், தனித்துப்பாடிக்கேட்டும் ஒருவர் இவ்வளவு யோக்யதையுடன் இருப்பது அபூர்வமென்பது எனது அபிப்பிராயம்.

மேலும் நமது தென்னாட்டில் முதல் முதல் ஸ்திரீகளில் கதா காலக்ஷேபம் செய்ய ஆரம்பித்தது இந்த அம்மாள்தான் யென்பது உலகமறிந்த விஷயம்.

நிற்க ஆரம்பகாலம் முதல் தத் காலம்வரை அபிவிருத்தியாகத் தொடர்ந்து உலக ப்ரக்யாதி வாய்ந்திருப்பது கலைவாணியின் அநுகிரகமென்றே சொல்லவேண்டும்.

இன்னும் ஓர் விசேஷம்; அதாவது அம்மாளவர்களின் கதாகாலக்ஷேபம் ஆரம்ப காலத்திலேயே, எனது பிதா அருள்வாக்கு சுப்பராம பாரதியாரவர்களால், ஸ்ரீமதி அம்மாளவர்களின் கதையைக் கேட்கப்பெற்று நற்சாக்ஷியாக ஷ்டியார்கள் மூலம், பாமாலையும் சூட்டப்பெற்றிருக்கிறார்கள். அப்பாமாலை பின்வருமாறு :—

திருப்பழனம் பஞ்சாப கேசனுட னே வயித்தி தில்லைத்தான
மிருக்கும் நர விம்ம பா கவதர் நன் னாட்டுக்கிரி சனிருக்கத்தந்தி
நருக்குமிலா மல் வருக ஞாயமுண்டு நானறிவேன் நகரத்தார் நெஞ்
சுருக்குமிவள் கதையதினு லுருக்குமணி மருமகளெ ன்றுரை பெற்றாளே.

இவ்வளவு யோக்யதைக்கு முக்கியமான காரணம் தமக்கு இருக்கும் குருபக்தி, ஸ்ரீ ஈசுவர பக்தி, தமக்கிருக்கும் யோக்யதை முதலானவைகளில் கொஞ்சமும் தற்பெருமை இல்லாதது தான்.

நிற்க ஸ்திரீ ஜாதியாரும் கதாகாலக்ஷேபம் முதலான நற்காரியங்கள் செய்யலாமென்பதற்கு ஸ்ரீமதியம்மாளவர்களே அத்தாக்ஷி.

ஈசனருளால் இவ்வளவு பெருமைவாய்ந்த அம்மாளவர்களுக்கு நீண்ட ஆயுளும் அழியாப்புகழும் செல்வமும் வளர்ந்தோங்க ஈசன் அருள்புரியக் கோருகிறேன்.

Purana Sagaram Sri Vasishta Bharati, 29th November 1939:

இற்றைக்கு சுமார் நூற்று இருபது வருஷங்களுக்குமுன், ஸங்கீதத்துடன் பிரஸங்கிக்கும் முறையை (கதாநிரூபணம்) கையாடிவந்த வித்வான்கள் வரகூர் கோபால பாகவதர் ஸ்வாமிகள் போன்ற சிலரே யாவர். அவர்களுள் ஒரு பெரியார் மேரூஸ்வாமிகள். அவர் வடமாகாணத்தில் உள்ள மஹாராஷ்டிர ஸமூகத்தில் உதித்தவர். சென்னை ராஜதானியில் உள்ள, தஞ்சை என்னும் பெரிய ராஜநகரம், ஸர்வ நாகரீகங்களிலும், வித்தையிலும், புத்தியிலும், சிறந்தது. அதற்கு காரணம் ஆண்ட அரசர்களின் சிறப்பேயாகும். அவ்வரசர்கள் குறைந்த காலத்தும் சாஸ்திர, சங்கீத மணம் கமழ்ந்துகொண்டிருந்தது. மேரூஸ்வாமிகள் கொண்டு வந்த புதிய ஸங்கீத சரக்குகள் ஹிந்துஸ்தான், மகாராஷ்டிர கீதம் வகைகள் (ஸாகி; தண்டி; ஓவி; ஆர்யா; அபங்க்; பதம்; கேகாவலி; பஞ்சசாமரம்; கட்கா) முதலியனவாம். ஒருவர் இவ்வளவு உருப்படி பேதங்களை பாடியும், நவரஸங்களோடு மஹாராஷ்டிர பாஷையில் பிரஸங்கிப்பது, பின் இருவர் நின்று (ஒருவர் தம்பூர் மீட்டுவது; ஒருவர் தாளம்) இருவரும் கதாசெய்பவரோடு முறை முறையாய் பாடுவது. இது அக்காலத்தின் தென்னாட்டில் ஒரு அற்புத காக்ஷியாய் விளங்கியது.

இம்மேரூஸ்வாமிகள் தஞ்சையிலும், புதுக்கோட்டை ஸமஸ்தானத்திலும் மடம் அமைத்து பிறகு திருவனந்த புரத்திற்கு சென்று, அரசரால் ஆதரிக்கப்பெற்று அங்கேயே தங்கிவிட்டார்.

அம்முறையை கைக்கொண்டவர் பூனா டிஸ்ட்ரிக்டில் இருந்துவந்த மோர்கா பாவா. மிக வயது சென்ற பெரியார், ஹரிபாவா, ராம் பாவா என்ற இருகுமாரர்களும், பின்பாட அவர் கதை செய்து வந்தார். சில வருஷங்கட்குப்பின், விஷ்ணு பாவா சித்தியடைந்த பிறகு, ராம் பாவா கதை பண்ணவும், அவர் தம்பியும், பய்யா என்றவரும் பின்பாட்டாக இருந்தார்கள்.

இந்த பாவா கதையில்தான் மிருதங்கம் வாசிப்பவர்கட்கு பீடம் கொடுக்கப்பட்டது. அதற்கு உரியவர் நாராயணஸ்வாமியப்பாயாவர். இவர் மிருதங்கத்தில் நிகர் அற்றவர் என்பது உலகப் பிரஸித்தம். இவருக்கு மஹாராஷ்டிர பாஷையிலும், ஸங்கீதத்திலும் தெளிந்த ஞானத்துடன், கர்நாடக ஸங்கீதத்திலும் உயர்ந்த ஞானம் உண்டு. பெரிய வித்வான்களும் இவர் சபையில் பாட பயப்படுவார்கள். பாவா மடம் தஞ்சாவூர் வடக்கு ராஜ வீதியில் உள்ள ராணி வாய்கால் சந்தில் உளது. இவரை ஆதரித்தவர்கள், சிவாஜி ராஜாவின் பதினெட்டு பத்னிகளில் இந்திராய்; வராய்; என்னும் இருவரும். அவர்கள் சகோதரர் கிருஷ்ணஸாமி ஸாஹிப் ஆவர். நான்கு மாஸங்கள் (சாதுர் மாஸ்யங்கள்) கதைகள் என்று பிரதிதினம் வேறு வேறு கதைகள் இரண்டு மணி நேரம் நடைபெறும். இந்த காலமே கதாநிரூபண காலம் என்று சொல்லப்படும். கானத்தோடு நவ ரஸங்களும் தாண்டவ மாடிக்கொண்டிருந்த காலம் என்றே சொல்லலாம். இக்கதைக்கு நித்ய மேளம் நாராண ஸாமியப்பா மிருதங்கம், ராம் ஸாஹிப் பிடில்; கிருஷ்ண பாகவதர் சுரபத் வாசிப்பார்கள்.

இவ்வித கதா நிரூபண உலகத்தை தமக்குள்ள மஹாராஷ்டிர பாஷா ஞானத்தோடும் சங்கீதத்தையும் வாரிச் செவிவழி உண்டு தன் ஹிருதயத்தில் நிரம்பக் கொண்டு அதை அப்படியே திருப்பி தமிழ் வடிவாக்கி தான் கதை பண்ணுவதற்கு கர்நாடகம், பரதம் முதலியனவோடும் சேர்த்து கிருஷ்ணபாகவதர் கொடுக்கக்கண்டு அவர்களே மகிழ்ந்தார்கள்.

கிருஷ்ண பாகவதரின், கர்நாடக ஸங்கீத சுத்தம், பாடுகிற ஒழுங்கு, பின் வருபவர்களுக்கு மேல்வரிச்சட்டமாய் இருந்தது ஆயினும் அது அவர்க்கே பொருத்தமாயிருந்தது.

சென்ற 1908ம் வருஷத்தில் இச்சென்னை நகரில் ஸரஸ்வதி பாய் என்ற சிறிய பெண் அரிய ஸங்கீத ஞானத்தோடு நிரூபணம் செய்யப் பழகி இருப்பதாக கேள்விப்பட்டேன். சில மாதங்களுக்கு பிறகு சென்னை மயிலாப்பூர் ஸங்கர்ஸா பங்களாவில் ஒரு தனிகர் வசித்தார். அவர் முறையூர் ஜமீன்தார் ஷண்முகம் செட்டியார். வெகு ரஸிகர். ஸங்கீத, ஸாஹித்ய வித்வான்களை ஆதரிப்பவர். அருந்தமிழ் விநோதர். இவர் பங்களாவில் இப்பெண்மணியின் கதை நிகழவும், அதை பல கனதனவான்கள் கேட்டுப் புகழவும் நேர்ந்தது. சில மாதங்களுக்கு பின் சென்னை தியாலாஜிகல் ஸ்கூல் ஹாலில் அக்காலத்தில் Income Tax Collector ஆயிருந்த ஸ்ரீ வீராரகவாசாரியார் முயற்சியில் பெரிய சபை கூட்டி கதை நடத்தப்பெற்றது. அன்றைக்கே பெரும் ஸன்மானமாக சுமார் ரூபாய் 500/- வரையில் சேகரித்து அளித்தார்கள். இவ்விளம்பரத்திலே அப்பெண்மணிக்கு ஹிந்துஸ்தான் சுத்தம், வெகுதெளிவாயிருப்பதுடன் கர்நாடக ஞானமும் வரவர விருத்தியடைந்து வந்தது. கதாம்சத்துக்குவேண்டிய பாணிகள், பாடும் முறைகள் பேசும் திறமை, அதற்கேற்ற ரஸபாவம் எல்லாம் ஒருங்கு அமைந்து நிறைந்திருந்தபடியால் இது தஞ்சாவூர் கிருஷ்ண பாகவதர் பாணி, இது இப்பெண்ணுக்கு எப்படி அமைந்தது என்று கண்டோர் அதிசயிக்கும்படி இருந்தது. இவள் கதையைக்கேட்ட பாகவதர்கள் இவள் செய்கையில் ஆச்சர்யம் அடைந்தாலும், இப்பெண் விருத்தியடைந்தால் தமது விருத்தி கெடும் என்ற பொறுமையால் அநேகர்கள் ஸ்திரீகள் கதை செய்யக்கூடாது என்று பிரசாரம் செய்தார்கள். ஆனால் இப்பெண்மணியின் அதிர்ஷ்டம் இத்தடைகளையாவும் தாண்டிக்கொண்டு மேல் ஓங்கிவிட்டது. அதற்குக்காரணம் குருபக்தியே ஆகும். அக்குரு எனது நண்பர் பிரும்மஸ்ரீ மஹாவித்வான்

கிருஷ்ணுசாரியார். இவர் தஞ்சாவூர் ஜில்லா, திருவையாறு என்ற க்ஷேத்திரத்தில் பிறந்த மத்வ பிராமண வித்வித் பரம்பரை பீமாசாரியார் புத்ரர். கீதாசாரியரான ஜகத் பிரஸித்த லக்ஷ்மணு சாரியார் சிஷ்யர். சென்னை கிருஸ்தவ காலேஜில் ஸம்ஸ்கிருத பண்டிதராயும் சிலகாலம் இருந்தார்.

இவர் தஞ்சாவூர் கிருஷ்ண பாகவதர் அவர்கள் செயலை எல்லாம் நன்ருய் உணர்ந்து அறியும் ஆற்றல் உடையவர். இப்பெண்மணியின் இளம் பிராயத்திலேயே அதற்குத் தக்க ஆசாரியனுய் இச்சென்னையில் அமைந்தார். அப்பெண்ணுக்குவேண்டிய கலைகளை கற்பித்து அவள் பிரஸித்தியடைவதற்கு தக்க பாத்திரம் என்று அறிந்து தாமே முழு ஊக்கம் கொண்டு கற்பிக்கலானுர்.

தான் வித்தையை கற்பிக்கும் விஷயத்தில் தகப்பனிலும் 1000 மடங்கு அதிகம் ஊக்கம் எடுத்துக்கொண்டு ஸங்கீதத்தையும், பேசும் திறமையையும், கதாபாவ ரஸங்களையும், அநேகம் நிரூபணங்களையும், நாளுக்கு நாள் விருத்தியடையச்செய்தது அன்றி, கூட இருந்து கண்ணும் இமையும்போல் பாதுகாத்து, வருவதை இன்றும் காணலாம்.

அநேக ராஜசபைகளிலும் பொதுசபைகளிலும் பல உயர்ந்த பரிசுகளும், மெடல்களும் பெற்றது கணக்கேயில்லை என்று சொல்லலாம். இப்பெண்மணியின் பூர்வஜன்ம ஸுகிருதம் ஒரு பாதி, ஆசாரியராகிய ஸ்ரீ கிருஷ்ணசாரியாரின் பேருதவி மறுபாதி, இவ்விரண்டும் ஒன்ருகி சேர்ந்து நிருபாதியாய் விளங்குவது அப்பெண்மணியின் புண்ணியமாம்.

சென்னை ராயல் தியேட்டரை சுதந்திரமாய்கொண்டு நாடக உலகத்துக்கு தனி ஆட்சி புரிந்த ஸ்ரீமான் கன்னையாவை அறியாதவர் இல்லை. அவரால் இப்பெண்மணி ரூபாய் 10000/- வரையில் பரிசு பெற்ருர். அதற்கு காரணம் "நான் பலர்களைக் கொண்டும், பல சாதனங்களை அமைத்தும் நடத்தும் நாடகக்காட்சி இப்பெண்மணி, நின்று, கதாரூபமாய் நடித்து பற்பல ரஸங்களையும் அமையக்காட்டி என் மனதை கொள்ளைகொண்டதற்கு அதுவே பரிசு ? இன்னும் எத்தனை ஆயிரம் கொடுத்தாலும் கொடுக்கலாம்" என்று சொன்னுர்.

1930ம் வருஷத்தில் ஸ்ரீமான் சி. கன்னையா என்னிடத்தில் கம்பராமாயணத்தை துவக்கி கேட்டு வரும்போது, ஸீதா கல்யாண மஹோற்சவம் ராயல் தியேட்டரில் வெகு சிறப்பாய் நடந்தது. இப்பெண்மணியின் கதை ஸீதாகல்யாணம் நிகழ்ந்தது. அப்போது ஸ்ரீமான் கன்னையா இன்று கதை எப்படி இருக்கிறது என்று என்னைக் கேட்டார்.

நான் தஞ்சாவூர் கிருஷ்ண பாகவதர் கதையை கேட்டு வெகு நாள் ஆனபடியால் அதை நான் ஒருவாறு பிறர்களிடத்தில் காணமுடியாமல் மறந்து இருந்தேன், இப்போது இப்பெண்மணியால் அக்கதா நிகழ்ச்சிகள் யாவும் இன்று அவரால் கேட்பதுபோல் நேர்ந்துவிட்டது. அது புருஷ ரூபம்; இது ஸ்திரீ ரூபம். இதுதான் பேதம்; என்று சொல்லக்கேட்ட ஸ்ரீமான் கன்னையா அன்றே மகிழ்ந்து, தன் மகிழ்ச்சிக்கு ஒர் அறிகுறியாய் ஸரஸ்வதி பாய்க்கு ரூபாய் 1000/- பெருமான ஒரு புல்லாக்கு அளித்தார்.

Sri Raghava Iyengar, Setu Samastana Mahavidwan, Annamalai University, 29th November 1939 :—

It is with very great pleasure that I associate myself in the appreciation of the many fine qualities of head and heart of Srimati C. Saraswati Bai Kirtanapatu, Gayanapatu. I have known her for a very long time. Many were the occasions both during the regime of the present Sri Raja Sethupathi Avergal as well as of his revered father, when she visited Ramnad on invitation to perform Kathas and on all these occasions her performances were highly appreciated by the Honourable Sethupathis who themselves were renowned scholars in music, and by their learned assemblies; and she was the recipient of many valuable prizes and encomiums. Gifted with a delectable voice and sweet melody she was able to please everybody. Her Kirtanas aptly and skilfully chosen to suit the Katha Performance and her masterly way of singing them are some of the salient features noticeable in her performances. She is well-versed in a number of languages and one cannot but admire the clear and flawless pronunciation of words in the different tongues. She has an unfailing knack of introducing apt anecdotes and timely wits in the course of her performance and this tends to make her Kathas first-rate performances enjoyed by all. I wish her long life and continued success in her career.

Kumararaja Muthia Chettiar of Chettinad, Adyar, 29th November 1939 :—

Srimati C. Saraswati Bai is a Lady Baghavathar of great distinction. Her exposition of the great truths lying scattered in the Ramayana, Mahabaratha and the Puranas is very fine. She has a beautiful ringing voice which is very pleasing to the ear and it is no wonder that her audience greatly enjoy her songs. Though fairly advanced in life her voice has lost none of its vigour and volume. She is fortunate in having Pandit Krishnachar as her Guru. May she live long and continue to entertain and educate the people through her fine Kalakshepam and soul stirring songs.

Dewan Bahadur A. M. Murugappa Chettiar, Madras, 29th November 1939 :—

I have known Srimati Saraswati Bai for more than thirty years. I have attended many of her performances in Chettinad and I have never failed to be struck by her melodious voice and marvellous achievement.

She has a great mastery of several languages. She holds an accredited place among Indian Musicians. She is eminently the Lady Bhaghavathar of South India, being well versed in all our ancient lore.

Sri Hari Nagabhushanam, B. A., **Voice-solo-Violinist, Masulipatam, 30th November 1939 :—**

I have known Srimati Saraswati Bai since 1911 when I went to Madras for the study of law, in the Law College. Even then she was an illustrious personage of rare gifts, as a pioneer Lady Bhaghavathar of the chosen-Brahmin caste. She used to attract large audiences, whenever she happened to deliver discourses of Harikatha Kalakshepams; and people used to admire her personality and talent, not to speak of her culture and scholarship.

I was impressed with her jubilant selfpossession, resourceful exposition, and graceful physiognomical expression in tune with Bhava and Rasa, and above all, her high-pitched voice and all-arresting musical flashes.

She stands a unique personality in the domain of Kalakshepams, and commands the respect of one and all who happen to hear her silver voice and sweet music, breathing through her devotional discourses.

Vynika Pravina Sri V. Venkatagiriappa, Mysore Palace Vidwan, 30th November 1939 :—

Srimati C. Saraswati Bai, Lady Bhagavathar of Madras came to Mysore in 1926 and gave Harikatha Kalakshepams in the Palace and before the public here. His Highness was pleased with her performance and honoured her with presents suitably, including thodas and killats. The public also greatly appreciated her talents in music, Katha presentation etc. She fully deserves the titles of "Gayanapatu" and "Kirtanapatu" bestowed on her.

Prof. P. Sambamoorthy, B.A., B.L. **Head of the Department of Indian Music, University of Madras, 30th November 1939.**

It is a happy idea to honour one of the eminent members of the musical profession with the presentation of a Commemoration Volume, The Jaganatha Bhakta Sabha has the proud privilege of adorning its walls with the portraits of brilliant musicians and composers of our times, both living and dead. The portrait of Srimati Saraswati Bai will be another valuable addition. The admirers of the distinguished lady Bhagavathar of Southern India must be congratulated upon having conceived the idea of presenting a Commemoration

Volume to her on the occasion. Hitherto this coveted honour was the privilege of scholars in other branches of learning. Hence the function that will be held in honour of the Gayanapatu on the 16th December 1939 will pass into history. The Kirtanapatu has already made history. She will be remembered by Posterity as the first lady Harikatha Performer. She entered the field at a time when brilliant Harikatha Performers like the late Pandit Lakshmanachariar and Tiruppayanam Panchapakesa Sastri were living and when the memory of the brilliant Kalakshepams of Krishna Bhagavathar were still green in the minds of the people. As a pioneer in the field, she had to face a lot of criticism and prejudice. But the fact that very soon after her entering the field she acquired a name and fame is proof positive of the fact that she possessed all the qualifications necessary in an ideal Bhagavathar. She entered the field fully equipped for her task.

Musicians in the past have been honoured in various ways. It is said that Shah Jehan once rewarded a musician with a fee of his weight in gold. Titles have been bestowed upon others by Maharajahs. Composers like Arunagirinathar and Ramaswamy Dikshitar were honoured with Kanakabhishakams. In some European countries, streets and squares have been named after musicians. Statues have been erected for them. Musical Colleges have been built in their names. Medallions with figures of Musicians have been made and sold at fancy prizes to the people. In some cases even castles have been built for them. But the presentation of a Commemoration Volume is a unique kind of tribute and Srimati Saraswati Bai's name will go down to Indian musicial history as the first musician to be honoured in this manner.

And she deserves the honour eminently. Though more known to the outside world as a Harikatha Performer, she is a musician of the front rank. Her uniformly successful professional career spread over a period of three decades is a thing of which any one could feel proud. She had born talents for her art. Her powers of exposition, the charming manner of her story-telling, her proficiency in both the systems of Indian Music, her ringing melodious voice, her scholarship in Sanskrit, Mahratti and the South Indian languages, her wide knowledge of the sacred lore and, above all, the sincerity of her devotion to her art have won for her a just place in the South Indian Musical world. She profited by the criticisms levelled against other Harikatha performers by the intelligentsia. She had also the knack of pleasing all types of audiences. Her good personality

and winning manners, her intimate knowledge of human nature and above all her sterling bhakti have in no small measure contributed towards her greatness and popularity.

I still remember vividly her first Kalakshepam on "Garuda Garva bhangam" that she performed in Ramaswamy Temple, 218, Thambu Chetty street, George Town, Madras in the year 1909 and the tremendous impression that she created even at that time. This function in the Jaganatha Bhakta Sabha in her honour will gladden the hearts of many people. She has already been honoured with many titles, medals and addresses; but this Commemoration Volume is a crowning honour and a fitting tribute to her genius.

Sangitaratnakara Sri. Ariyakudi T. Ramanuja Iyengar, President of the Madras Music Academy Annual Conference of 1938, 30th November, 1939:

ஸ்ரீமதி C. ஸரஸ்வதி பாயம்மாள் 30 வருஷங்களுக்கு மேலாகவே நல்ல கியாதியோடு கதை செய்து வருவது அனைவரும் அறிந்த விஷயம். நான் என் குரு ஸ்ரீ. பூச்சி ஸ்ரீனிவாஸய்யங்கார் அவர்களிடம் ஸங்கீத பாடம் கற்கும்பொழுதே, என் குருவே இந்த அம்மாளின் ஸங்கீதத்தின் மேன்மையைப்பற்றியும் கதை செய்யும் திறமையைப்பற்றியும், இராமநாதபுரம் காலம் சென்ற ராஜா முத்துராமலிங்க ஸேதுபதி அவர்களிடம் தெரிவித்து, அவரும் அந்த அம்மாளைத் தருவித்து ஏராளமாய் ஸன்மானங்களைச் செய்திருப்பதை நானே என் குருவோடுகூடஇருந்து பார்த்திருக்கிறேன். அப்பொழுது நான் நெருங்கிப்பழகாவிட்டாலும் அடிக்கடி கதைகளை மாத்திரம் மிகவும் குதூஹலத்துடன் கேட்பேன். 1919-ம் ஷஷ்த்தில் கண்டனூரில் ஒரு தனவைச்யருடைய கிருகத்தில் நடந்த விவாக ஸமயம் நானே அந்தம்மாளைத் தருவித்துஎன் ஸங்கீதத்தை அவர் கேட்க ஸந்தர்பம் ஏற்பட்டது. அது முதல் நாங்கள் ஸகோதர ஸகோதரிகளாகவே நெருங்கிப்பழகிவருகிறோம். ஸ்ரீ ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் பாடும் திறமை, கதை செய்வதில் உள்ள ஸாமர்த்தியம், கர்நாடகங்களில் உள்ள ஸம்பிரதாயம், பாணி எல்லாம் இயற்கையாகவே அமைந்து இருப்பதைக்கண்டு கேட்டு ஆனந்திக்கிறேன்.—மேலும் என் ஸங்கீதத்தில் அவருக்கு அதிகப் பிரியம் என்பதை மகிழ்ச்சியுடன் தெரிவித்துக்கொள்ளுகிறேன். என்னிடம் ஏதாவது உருப்படிகளை பாடம் செய்தால் அதை மற்றொரு ஸமயம் நானே கேட்கும்பொழுது, அதே உருப்படிக்கு தனியாய் ஒரு ஜீவகளையை உண்டாக்கி பிரமிக்கும்படி பாடுவார். எவ்வளவு ஸங்கீத ஞானமிருந்திருந்தால் இப்படி ஆரம்பம் முதல் நாளது வரையிலும் ஒரேமாதிரியாய் சளைக்காமல் ஜனங்களுக்கு திருப்தியை உண்டாக்கி கொண்டுவர முடியும்? அவர் தனக்குள்ள கர்நாடகம் ஹிந்துஸ்தானி இருவகை ஸங்கீதங்களிலுமுள்ள பரிபூர்ண ஞானம், ஸம்ஸ்கிருதம் முதலிய பாஷா ஞானம், சொல்லும் திறமை, வாக்படுத்வம், ஸபையை வசீகரிக்கும் சக்தி, இவைகளினால் இந்தியாவில் உள்ள விசேஷ இடங்களிலும், ஸிலோன் பர்மா முதலிய இடங்களிலும் கூட இராஜாக்களிடமும், ப்ரபுக்களிடமும் ஸபைகளிலும் தோடாக்கள் மெடல் சால்வைகள் பிருதுகள் முதலிய ஸன்மானங்களை கணக்கில்

லாமல் வாங்கியிருப்பதை நான் நன்றாய் அறிவேன். இவர் ஸங்கீதமே தனிதோரணையில் அமைந்திருக்கிறது என்றாலும், இவர் ஹிந்துஸ்தானியையோ தாஸர்பதங்களையோ பாடும் பொழுது அதற்கு ப்ரத்யேகமதிப்புண்டு. சென்ற வருஷம் ஸங்கீதவித்வத் ஸபை சார்பாய் நடந்த ஸங்கீத மகாநாட்டில் நான் தலைமை வகித்த ஸமயம்; இவர் காலக்ஷேபத்தைப்பற்றி அழகான ஒரு வ்யாஸம் வாசித்தார். அந்த ஸமயம் வந்திருந்த அனைவரும் இவருடைய ஸம்ஸ்கிருத ஞானத்தைப்பற்றி அபாரமாய் மெச்சினார்கள். இவர் தீர்க்காயுஸ்ஸோடு இப்படியே கதை செய்துகொண்டு ஸர்வஜனங்களையும் திருப்திப்படுத்திக் கொண்டிருக்க ஸ்ரீ ஸர்வேச்வரனைப் ப்ரார்த்திக்கிறேன்.

இவ்வளவு மேலான குணம் படைத்தவருக்கு எழும்பூர் ஜகந்நாத பக்த ஸபையார் உருவப்படம் ஸ்தாபித்துக்கௌரவிக்க முன் வந்ததைப்பற்றி நான் மிகவும் ஸந்தோஷிக் கிறேன்.

Sir Mirza. M. Ismail, Dewan of Mysore, 1st December 1939:—

I am much interested to learn of the proposal of the members of the Jagannatha Bhakta Sabha, Madras, to do honour to Srimati C. Saraswati Bai, the famous lady Bhagavathar and musician of South India, by unveiling her portrait on December 16 and also by presenting her with a commemoration volume.

Srimati Saraswati Bai has been a well known exponent of the science and art of music for nearly thirty years now. Her proficiency in music is admittedly of a very high order. She has deservedly won many tokens of recognition, the most notable of them being the one graciously conferred upon her by His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore, whose profound interest in Indian music is well known.

I hope that Srimati Saraswati Bai may continue to delight all lovers of music for many a year to come.

Sri Chembai Vythinatha Bhagavatar, 2nd December 1939 :—

ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதி பாயம்மாள் கதையை முதல் முதல் பாலக்காட்டில் ஒரு ப்ரபு வீட்டுக் கல்யாண ஸமயம் என்னுடைய 11-வது வயதில் கேட்டிருக்கிறேன். அன்று முதல் நாளது வரையிலும் எவ்வளவோ ஸமயங்களில் கேட்டிருக்கிறேன். கதை அமோகமாயி ருந்தது என்னும் வார்த்தையைத் தவிர இரண்டாவது பேச்சே அந்தஅம்மாள் விஷயத்தில் எப் பொழுதுமே கிடையாது. நானே நம்ம பக்கத்தில் இரண்டு கதைகளுக்கு வரவழைத்திருக் கிறேன். ஆயிரக்கணக்கான ஜனங்கள் பரவசமாய் கதை கேட்பதைப்பார்த்து ஆனந்தமடை வேன். திருச்சி பிடில் வித்வான் கோவிந்தஸாமி பிள்ளை அவர்கள் பலதடவைகளில் இந்தக் கதையைப்பற்றி அபாரமாய் சிலாகித்துப் பேசியதோடு, அவர் தோடா ஸன்மானமும் செய்

திருக்கிருர். இப்படி 30 வருஷகாலமாய் யோக்கியதாம்சத்தில் ஏற்றமாகவே இருப்பதற்குக் காரணம் ஒரு ஸ்திரீ ஜாதி என்று சொல்லிக்கொண்டிருக்க முடியுமா? இவர் ஆரம்பித்த பிறகு எவ்வளவோ ஸ்திரீகள் கதைக்கு ஆரம்பித்து சில வருஷங்களோ சில மாதங்களோ அல்லது ஒன்றுமே நடக்காமலோ போயிருப்பதை நாம் கண்ணாரப்பார்த்தும் இன்னும் அக்காரணம் சொல்லுவதில் உபயோகமேயில்லை. இவருடைய சாரீரம் மிருதுவாயும் கம்பீரமாயும், மந்தர, மத்யம, தாரஸ்தாயிகளில் ஸமபலத்தோடு நல்ல சாரீரமுள்ள புருஷர்களைப்போல் பேசக் கூடியது. அதோடு நல்ல ஞானம், வாக்சாதுர்யம், நல்ல படிப்பு, ஸம்ஸ்கிருதம், தமிழ், தெலுங்கு எதில் உருப்படி பாடினுலும் அக்ஷரஸ்பஷ்டம். கதை செய்யும்பொழுது பாவம் தெரியாத பாமரர்களுக்கும் தெரிவிக்கச்செய்யப் போதுமான ஸங்கீத ப்ரவசன சக்தி, இந்த ஸாமக்கிரிகளால் இந்தஅம்மாள், ஸகல வித்வான்களையும், கனவான்களையும் ஸங்கீத கதைத் தொழிலாளிகளையும் ஆச்சரியப்படுத்துவதில் என்ன ஆச்சரியம்? ஸங்கீதத்திற்கு முக்கிய அம்சங்களான சுருதி, லயம் இரண்டும் அபூர்வமாய் அமைந்திருக்கின்றன. எந்தெந்த காலத் தில் ஜனங்களுக்கு எம்மாதிரி ஸங்கீதம் வேண்டுமோ அவைகளை அறிந்து பாடுவது மற்றொரு ஸாமர்த்தியம். ஆகையால்தான் இந்த அம்மாளின் கதை கொஞ்சமும் இறக்கமென்பதே இல் லாமல், ஸமுத்திரம் மாதிரி பொங்கிக்கொண்டிருக்கிறது. இப்படியே இந்த அம்மாள் திருட காத்திரத்தோடு கதை செய்துகொண்டிருக்க பகவானை வேண்டிக்கொள்ளுகிறேன். இந்த அம்மாளுக்கு உருவப்படம் வைப்பதை அல்லாமல், இன்னும் எம்மாதிரியாய் கௌரவிப்பதானு லும் இவர் தகுந்தவர் என்றே நான் மனப்பூர்வகம் தெரிவிக்கிறேன்.

Sri Semmangudi Srinivasa Aiyar, 2nd December 1939 :-

காயனபடு கீர்த்தனப்படு ஸ்ரீமதி C. ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அம்மாள் அவர்களின் கதையை யும் ஸங்கீதத்தையும் எனக்கு தெரிந்த கடந்த 22 வருஷகாலமாகக்கேட்டு அனுபவித்து வரு கிறேன். பல பெரிய வித்வான்களால் ஒப்புக்கொள்ளப்பட்டு உலகத்தில் ஒரு ஸ்தானத்தை அவர் அடைந்தார் என்பதை நான் சொல்லத் தேவையில்லை.

ஸ்ரீமதி பாயம்மாள் அவர்களுக்குப்பல பாஷைகளிலும் நல்ல பாண்டித்யமிருப்பது அவர்கள் கதையை ரொம்பவும் பரிமளிக்கச்செய்கிறது. தமிழ், தெலுங்கு, கன்னடம், மராத்தி, ஹிந்துஸ்தானி, ஸம்ஸ்க்ருதம், இம்மாதிரி பல பாஷைகளிலும் உள்ள கீர்த்தனங்களை அர்த்த பாவத்தைத் தானே பூர்ணமாக உணர்ந்து பாடி அர்த்தத்தையும் சொல்லும் பொழுது கேட்ப வர்களின் மனதை உருகும்படிச் செய்கிறது. நல்ல வாக் வன்மையுடன் கதையின் பாவத்தை நன்கு வெளிப்படுத்துகிருர்.

ஸ்ரீமதி பாயம்மாள் அவர்கள் சாரீரம் ரொம்பவும் கிராஹ்யமானது. அவர்கள் சாரீரத் தில் சுருதி சுத்தம் அமைந்திருப்பது வடதேசத்து பிரபல வித்வான்களை ஞாபகப்படுத்துகிறது. சுருதியைவிட்டுக்கொஞ்சங்கூட நழுவாத சாரீரம். பல விதமான கமகங்களும் சவுக்க மத்யம துரித காலப் பெரட்டல்களும் ரொம்பவும் அழகாகப் பண்ணிப்புதைத்ததுபோல் பேசுவதோடு தாயாகிய சுருதியை அணைந்துகொண்டே பேசுவதானது மிகவும் பிரமிக்கத்தக்கது.

அவர்களுக்கு கர்ணாடக ஞானமும் ஹிந்துஸ்தானி ஞானமும் ரொம்பவும் உயர்வாக அமைந்திருக்கிறது. அவர்கள் கர்ணாடக ராகங்களும் உருப்படிகளும் அதில் நிரவலும் செய்து பாடிவரும்பொழுது ஹிந்துஸ்தானி ஜாடையே வருவதில்லை. கர்ணாடகம் தனியாகவும் ஸம்பிரதாயமாகவும் ப்ரத்யேகஸ்வரூபத்துடனும் விளங்குகிறது.

அவர்கள் ஹிந்துஸ்தானி ராகங்களையோ உருப்படிகளையோ பாடி நிரவி வரும்பொழுது துளிகூட கர்ணாடகம் கலவாமல் ப்ரத்யேகமாக இருப்பதைக்காணலாம். அந்த மாதிரிகலக்காமல் பாடுவது இலேசல்ல. அப்படிக்கிருந்தும் அனாயாஸமாகப் பாடிவிடுகிறார். அது கேட்பவர்களைப் பிரமிக்கத்தான் செய்கிறதென்பதற்கு ஸந்தேகமேயில்லை.

ஸ்ரீமதி பாயம்மாள் அவர்கள் குணம் ரொம்பவும் உயர்வானது. பிறர் பாடும் ஸங்கீதத்தை பாரபக்ஷமில்லாமலும் நிரஸூயையாகவும் கேட்டு ஸந்தோஷப்படுவார். எல்லாவற்றைக்காட்டிலும் அவர்களுக்கிருக்கும் குருபக்தி ரொம்பவும் விசேஷமானது. தனது குருநாதரின் அனுமதியன்னியில் ஒரு காரியமும் செய்வதில்லை. எது செய்வதானாலும். குருநாதரின் அனுமதியைப்பெற்றுத்தான் செய்கிறார். அன்னாரின் குருநாதராகிய ப்ரும்மஸ்ரீ கிருஷ்ணாசார் அவர்கள் அனுக்கிரஹம் பரிபூர்ணமாக இருக்கிறதனால்தான் ஸ்ரீமதி பாயம்மாள் அவர்கள் யோக்யதை பன்மடங்காகப் பிரகாசிப்பதுடன் ஜகத் கியாதியாக விளங்குகிறார் என்பதை நான் நம்புகிறேன்.

ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அம்மாள் அவர்களுக்கு தீர்க்காயுளையும் அரோக திடகாத்ர சரீரத்தையும் கொடுத்து அனுக்ரஹிக்குமாறு கடவுளை நான் ப்ரார்த்திக்கிறேன்.

Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar, Advocate General, Madras, 3rd December 1939 :—

I have witnessed several performances by Srimati C. Saraswati Bai. She combines in herself devotion, musical talent of a high order and rare powers of exposition. It is very much to be regretted that the type of Baghavatars of which Srimati Saraswati Bai is an illustrious example is fast disappearing. I am most happy to send my greetings to Srimati Saraswati Bai on the occasion of the unveiling of her portrait under the auspices of Jagannatha Bhakta Sabha, Egmore.

Sri Musiri Subramania Aiyar, 3rd December, 1939 :—

It was in the year 1912. I believe I had the first opportunity of hearing Srimati Saraswati Bai's Harikatha performance in an over crowded hall. Without exception the audience was spell-bound. Ever since that time, I used to attend many of her Harikatha performances and it is needless for me to say that every time I enjoyed the performance with renewed interest.

As for her voice and music which are rare to find together, they are simply enchanting. The wonderful qualities of her voice are surprisingly good

and best seen when she changes from speech to song and song to speech ; at all times the voice being correctly attuned to the Sruti. A musician alone can fully appreciate the difficulties of attuning the voice to Sruti after a speech.

After hearing Srimati Saraswati Bai one is not only impressed by the high qualities of her Harikatha but also of her histrionic abilities of high order.

May she live long hale and healthy to delight the public with her talents.

Sri. K. Ponniah Pillai, University of Madras, 3rd December 1939 :—

ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதி பாய் அம்மாள் அவர்களைப் பலநாளாக நான் நன்கு அறிவேன். அவர்களின் கல்வி, சங்கீதத்திறம் மிகவும் சிரேஷ்டமானது. அவர் சாரீரத்தின் குணம், கம்பீரம், இனிமை, அதோடு ஞானம், வாக்கின் தெளிவு முதலியவைகள் கேட்போரை பரவச மடையச் செய்துவிடும்.

சுமார் இருபத்தைந்து ஆண்டுகளுக்குமுன் தஞ்சையில் கலைஞான ரஸிகத்துவம் வாய்ந்த ஸ்ரீமான் திண்டு ஐயர் என்ற ஓர் ப்ரபுவின் வீட்டில் ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதி பாய் அவர்களின் ஹரிகதையை நான் முதன் முதலில் கேட்கநேர்ந்தது. அன்று ஸீதாகல்யாணம் என்னும் கதையை நடத்தினர்; மிகவும் ஆச்சரியமாயிருந்தது. அந்த சபையில் கூடியிருந்த சங்கீத வித்வான்கள், பாகவதர்கள், ரஸிகர்கள் முதலியோர் அக்கதையைக் கேட்டு அளவுகடந்த சந்தோஷத்தை யடைந்தனர். கொஞ்ச காலமுன்னிருந்த பிரபல வித்வான்களாகிய ஸ்ரீ கோனேரி ராஜபுரம் வைத்யநாதய்யர், திருச்சி ஸ்ரீ கோவிந்தசாமி பிள்ளை, புதுக்கோட்டை ஸ்ரீ தக்ஷிணாமூர்த்தி பிள்ளை முதலியோர்களால் நன்கு மதிக்கப்பட்டு கொண்டாடப்பட்டவர்.

1933-ல் நான் சென்னை சங்கீத வித்வச் சபை மஹாநாட்டிற்கு தலைமை வகித்த காலத்தில் ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதி பாய் அவர்கள் ஹரிகதையைப்பற்றி ஓர் வியாசம் வாசித்தார்கள். அவ்வியாசத்தில் அவர்கள் கூறிய அரும்பெரும் விஷயங்களைச் சபையில் கேட்டு அறிந்து இன்புற்றோம். நூலாராய்ச்சி விஷயத்தில் இவர்களுக்கு இருக்கும் திறமையைக்கண்டு நான் மிகவும் சந்தோஷமடைந்தேன்.

Sri. T. M. Krishnaswami Aiyar, Advocate, Madras, 3rd December 1939 :—

Srimati C. Saraswati Bai is easily the master of her art and the few occasions I had the pleasure of attending her performances, the house was always full to overflowing. She has the peculiar knack of catering to the varied tastes of the audience. From the humorous to the sublime, from the mundane to the divine, she always kept up the interest in the theme of her exposition, with the versatility she commands in the art of music and in the knowledge of various languages. The Kirtanams she renders are drawn from many languages and her performances never lacked the back ground of devotion which Kalakshepams are designed primarily and ultimately to subserve.

Dr. V. Raghavan, M.A., Ph.D., Sanskrit Department, University of Madras, 3rd December 1939 :—

From time to time, we have been evolving several forms of literature and art for the popular dissemination of our culture. It may be lamented by many of our leaders and mentioned by foreign critics as a mark of our backward state that our masses are illiterate. True our masses are illiterate; and so too most of our womenfolk; but they are hardly uncultured. In ancient days, the learned were always keeping the people at large in touch with the advancement in knowledge, and it is significant that we speak of knowledge as "Kelvi". The "Kelvi" system is not inefficient today when we find the Universities organising schemes of extension lectures, and party politics exploiting to the full the facilities of personal and broadcast propaganda. The fast in-stepping of the radio and the moving and talking picture as handmaids of education is only a fulfilment of the hoary "Kelvi" system.

The Mahabharata says that the four Vedas become complete with the fifth called the *Akhyanas*, the stories. The epics of Valmiki and Vyasa themselves arose for bringing to the plains of the people the Himalayan waters of the Vedas. Pantanjali, the great grammarian, refers to the *Granthika* who pictured to vast audiences how of old Krishna killed Kamsa and Vishnu subdued Bali. Later grammarians have understood this reference as also to the *Kathaka,* the ancestor of our present day Bhagavatars. The reading out of the epics and the puranas aud expounding them to the people is also a species of the same. It is to make greater appeal to the masses and to teach them unobstrusively through entertainment that the arts of music and dance were added to the forms of popular expositions. The *Alamkarikas* say that the aim of poetry also is to teach, but that its method of conversion is like that of the artful beloved, *Kanta-Sammita.*

The South Indian Harikatha of which Tamilnad can justly be proud received many of its present features at Tanjore on the meeting our culture had with that of the Mahrattas. But the Tamil genius which has a gift for multi-coloured bouquet-making and distilling into its perfume the essence of many flowers, soon enriched the Kalakshepa-form with Telugu, Kannada and Hindi. What are the main features of this art of Hari Katha Kalakshepa done by our Bhagavata musicians ? First of all it has to be the exposition of a religious story, resulting in the moral, religious and spiritual exaltation of the listeners. But this being no sermon, it has to be an entertainment also. Here comes the

the musical equipment of the Bhagavatar. There are Kalakshepakaras who make an apology of the Katha, and there are Kathakaras who have little music to sustain them or ourselves. Neither is a real artist in this category. As an exponent, the Bhagavatar has to make his acquaintance above the level of smattering in the languages and the religious literatures of Tamil, Sanskrit, Mahrathi, Telugu, Kannada and Hindi. If the Bhagavatar is a real artist, he will even pick up sufficient Muhammadan speech for a story like that of Ramdas. In the same language like Tamil, a Bhagavatar handling a story like Nandanar must master slang usages to a degree of naturalness; for what is this art if it is not a concentrated drama, one single and gifted actor entering swiftly a whole theme of characters, moods and manners? The accompaniment of suitable gesture will certainly complete the picture.

The power of such a perfected Kalakshepa is immense. No wonder a nationalist Bhagavatar harnessed this form for the Congress and evolved his once popular cycle of Gandhi Charitra. And no wonder also that the imitative ways of the christian missions in our midst have embraced the plan of counter Katha Kalakshepas. If only our reformers will make organised widespread use of our Harikatha, they would have begun in the right end in their task of preventing our countryside flocks from walking in such numbers into alien folds.

Humour is indeed a very welcome ingredient in this art, but our experience has left us disappointed in the capacity of our Bhagavatars for introducing this difficult touch without impropriety. Thanks to examples set by some of the Bhagavatars esteemed highly by most people, the errors of taste passing muster as humour are fast becoming too numerous to enable the Harikatha to maintain its distance from the performance of the *Vikata-kavi*. We would rather not have anything under this head than stand tedious drolleries.

When the Alamkarikas explained the function of poetry as counsel of the winning type that the beloved lady administers along with her blandishments, the simile of Kanta Sammita remained a mere figure of speech for a long time till it was left to South India to find the actual lady-medium for such sweet instruction. And it is to Srimati Saraswati Bai that the great glory of having been the pioneer of this line of sweet instructors belongs. Her success must be measured by the poor level and even failure of the many ladies who began treading the part first walked by her. Indeed she compares favourably and proves better than even many of our gentlemen Bhagavatars. First and foremost

of her qualities is music where she does justice to both the Carnatic and the Hindustani styles, with nothing spurious about the latter.

The Kalakshepam art has come to her in good Parampara from no less a leader of the line than Mr. Krishna Bhagavatar of Tanjore. Regarding literary equipment, she compels admiration in an age when musicians make a pulp of the Sahitya. She pronounces with the security of a scholar the several tongues, Sanskrit, Telugu, Kanarese, Mahrathi, etc., without any flaw. Her Sanskrit for the Kalakshepa art is enough, that is, she suffers not from that scholarship which leaves the average listener in our Sabhas bewildered. In her performance, the ingredients are in just and sufficient proportion.

We certainly cannot like that Bhagavatar who deals in a surprising variety of stories but shows little remarkability in any of them. A select repertoire and everything "Kacchidam" in it is what is preferable, and that is what she has.

An appreciation of a pupil is unjust and incomplete without a proper tribute to the teacher. The care and attention of Brahmasri Vidvan Krishnachar have made his pupil what she is today. He is to be congratulated also on the acquisition of a receptive student who was quick to grasp. The knowledge of the preceptor receives a new lustre when imparted to the proper disciple, says Kalidas

पात्रविशेषे न्यस्तं गुणान्तरं व्रजति शिल्पमाधातुः।

May I close with a benediction pronounced by Kalidasa himself

सरस्वती श्रुतिमहिता महीयताम्।

Sri. W. Doraiswami Aiyangar, Retired Manager of Longmans Green & Co., Madras, 3rd December 1939 :—

It is with immense pleasure that I associate myself with glowing tributes that are being paid to Sri. Saraswati Bai, Lady Bhagavatar, from all parts of the Country. I am personally elated at the opportunity I am given for presenting her portrait to the Jagannatha Bhakta Sabah as a token of my sincere appreciation and admiration of her talents.

More than three decades ago, my friend the late Mridangam Vidwan Mylattur Krishnier expressed to me very strongly that a young girl was singing remarkably well and that her Music was worth my hearing. In spite of my regard for my friend's opinion, I had my own doubts about the quality of Music that was in store for me. With much reluctance I accompanied my friend

to her house. Some of my other friends, Messrs. Sabesa Iyer, late Vidwan Govindaswamy Pillai and Panchapakesa Bhagavatar of Tanjore were already there. Sri. Saraswati Bai commenced her Music with a Thyagaraja Kirtana (I do not exactly remember the piece now). The very first piece astonished me and I was really struck at the exquisite rendering. She followed it up by some more pieces, one of which was the Canarese Javali "Mathada Barathen" in Kamas. Every piece she sang was as perfect as it could be. What! A young girl of about 10 or 11 years old to have an excellent "Kalapramana and Laya Suddha" with that melodious Voice and Raga Gnana! Very rarely we find these features present even in the case of matured Musicians. She wound up the Concert with some Hindustani Songs. Here again she excelled and particularly proved beyond doubt that it was possible to sing both the South Indian & North Indian Systems of Music without intermixing them.

At the end of the concert, I felt I was, as it were, under a spell.

A couple of years later, I learnt that she took to performance of Harikathas. This prejudiced me very much for two reasons viz., firstly, my own objection that a woman should not try to lecture on Bhakti to the public; and secondly, she was treading on a field where that great Krishna Bhagavatar had already made a name and set a standard which was well nigh impossible to attain. I therefore completely avoided her performances.

About ten years later, there was some marriage to which I was invited. I had to attend that marriage and Sri. Saraswati Bai was performing a Harikatha Kalakshepam on "Sita Kalyanam". Out of formality I had to be one of the audience and felt it delicate to leave the hall immediately. There were many leading persons present. I heard her for a few minutes and I was at once elated with joy. I then decided to remain to the end of the performance, which revived my memories of that great Krishna Bhagavatar of whom she proved herself to be an out-and-out Facsimile.

Gifted with a rich and melodious voice, powerful and chaste diction and histrionic talents to a remarkable degree, she proved herself to be a super class exponent of Harikatha Kalakshepams. A Bhagavatar should be a good musician, Puranika and a dramatist of high order; three combined in one and it is very rare to find a Bhagavatar equipped with these qualifications, I can say without fear of contradiction that Sri. Saraswati Bai possesses a harmonious blending of these three qualities; and she stands today as a Premier Bhagavatar unrivalled, unsurpassed, unequalled.

The fact the she has been more than thirty years in this field maintaining high reputation is sufficient proof to demonstrate her worth and popularity.

I cannot conclude without paying her a high tribute for her great contribution to the art of Music. Harikatha is the best medium of propagating music among all classes of people unlike musical concerts which, appeal only to a limited section of people who can understand the finer points of Music. She deserves a greater recognition by the public and I am confident that her name will go down to posterity.

Rao Bahadur Sri. K. V. Krishnaswami Aiyar, President, Music Academy 3rd December 1939 :—

On the occasion of the unveiling of the portrait of Srimati C. Saraswati Bai, I wish to express my appreciation of her services to the cause of music and kalakshepam.

She has been in the front rank of Katha performers for over a quarter of century, She represents the high tradition of the school of Krishna Bhagavathar of Tanjore. Her discourse is straight, simple, and effective and altogether free from low humour. Her knowledge of languages enabled her to do justice to the sahitya of the song she sang. Her music is of a high order.

Sri. S. Satyamurti, B.A., B.L, M.L.A. (Central) and Mayor of Madras, 3rd December 1939 :—

I am very glad to have the opportunity of paying my tribute of regard and admiration to the musical and oratorical talents of Sri Saraswati Bai, perhaps the most distinguished lady exponent of the art of Kalakshepam today in South India, if not the whole of India. Few musicians have had such a distinguished career. "Innocently to amuse the imagination in this dream of life is wisdom," so wrote Oliver Goldsmith. Undoubtedly musicians perform this task supremely well; and among them Sri. Saraswati Bai will always hold a high and honoured place.

Her music is really of a very distinguished quality: her voice is sweet and penetrating: she can reach heights and depths, which few others can reach. At the same time, her voice is one of the sweetest, I have ever heard. "Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thoughts" so wrote Shelly. But Sri. Saraswati Bai has used her talents and her sweet voice to tell us, not only of the saddest thoughts, but also of the most joyful thoughts.

She is particularly excellent in rendering Hindustani music. Indeed, few South Indians can reach her excellence in this sphere. Her command in Hindustani music is as high as her command in Carnatic music. She is a unique example and exponent of South Indian and Hindustani music, at the same level and excellence.

But mere musical excellence cannot help to make a good performer of Kalakshepams. Sri. Saraswati Bai, thanks to her talented Guru Sri. Krishnachar, is a magnificent speaker. I know the difficulties of public speaking; and I have no hesitation in congratulating Sri. Saraswati Bai on the high level of public speaking, which she has attained and maintained. In diction, in logic, in powerful appeal, and in exposition of great stories of our Puranas and Ithihasas, she can hardly be improved upon.

Thank God, she is still in possession of her full power. May God spare her many more years to amuse, instruct, and elevate thousands of men, women and children, who hear, enjoy, and profit by her Kalakshepams.

Rao Bahadur C. Ramanujachar (Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home) Mylapore, 5th December 1939 :—

Who could have dreamt, three decades ago, that the poor little girl, whose latent phenomenal gift of voice and rare acquisitive capacity to assimilate were the concern of some of the discerning and sympathetic patrons of fine art as to how best to aid their natural development would to-day be one of the brilliant stars in the firmament, commanding easily the admiration of the savant and the layman ? Srimati Saraswati Bai's genius lay in the adventurous and courageous choice of her career. A path not trodden before her by any of her sex was boldly taken up by her in a pioneering spirit and with an abundance of self confidence and grit. She could easily have succumbed to the allurement of distinction as a bare musical technician or even as an actor on the stage. With an indefatigable industry and onepointedness she applied herself to acquiring all the component qualifications needed for a successful and effective Harikatha performer. To an outstanding merit in music, she has been able to add as her accomplishments a decent and varied knowledge of sanskrit literature, which equipped her with a store of chaste and elevating thoughts, beauty of correct enunciation which disclosed an insight into the import of the words used, fluency of expression, force of delivery, eloquence and modulation of voice effectively to appeal to emotions, personality adapted easily to poses and gestures to aid declamations, and dignified humour not seeking the aid of vulgarity. In this

preparation for the Bhagavatar's role, she had the unique fortune to have the unstinted, loyal and sincere help and guidance of Brahma Sri Krishna Achar Swami, who still continues to occupy the respected place of her preceptor and father; and the public know what debt of gratitude she owes to him.

Fully equipped thus, Saraswati Bai made per appearance in public as a Harikatha performer thirty one years ago. The noble art, though it has fallen now on evil days threatening to leave us a barren legacy, had still then, for its exponents some towering stalwarts, whose spirit and characteristics she caught with extraordinary facility and quickly reached a level surpassed by few. She shot like a meteor and has stayed like a star with unfading brilliance. Her enthralling music, her voice unfailingly united in wedlock to *Sruti*, her chaste rendering of Carnatic and Hindustani music without admixture, remind one of that Prince of Bhagavatars the famous Krishna Bhagavatar; her melodious delivery of Sanskrit verses, bringing forth bhavas inherent in them reminds one of the late Panchapakesa Sastriyar, the brilliant Scholar among Bhagavatars; in her there is a judicious and happy combination of all the talents which go to make up a typical Bhagavatar. It is thus no wonder that she has been able to maintain her eminence in the field even without laying any claim to the franchises naturally appertaining to her sex, for over three decades.

The admirable qualities of her head have found a very appropriate and congenial setting in the sterling virtues of her heart which never hesitated to open to give deserved succour to the needy and to the suffering. Her services are never denied to those that appeal to her for them; and she never allows her comforts nor health, poor as it has been, to stand in the way of her talents being used for the service of humanity.

Here is a lady, blessed with talents and manifold accomplishments, imbued with noble instincts, dedicating herself for the promotion of the finest of fine arts and for the service of humanity therewith, who has vindicated the claims of her sex to undertake the onerous and arduous task of conducting religious discourses even to members of the other sex, given the opportunity and afforded the facility for it, and has demonstrated that that task could be successfully and satisfactorily carried out when sympathy, goodwill and just appreciation are vouched.

May the Lord bless her with long life, health and purposeful activity!

Sister R. S. Subbalakshmi, B.A., L.T. **5th December 1939 :—**

I have been acquainted with Srimati C. Saraswati Bai for the past nearly 30 years and have enjoyed immensely her exquisite music and Kalakshepams.

Goddess Saraswati has blessed this daughter of Hers with a good melodious voice, versatile knowledge, power of expression and humour.

May Ishwara bless her with long life, health, and all prosperity.

K. V. Al. M. Ramanathan Chettar Kottayam, 5th December 1939 :—

எங்கும் பிரஸித்தியடைந்திருக்கும் ஸ்ரீமதி C. ஸரஸ்வதி பாயவர்களின் ஹரிகதையும் ஸரி ஸங்கீதமும் ஸரி எல்லோரையும் திருப்திபடுத்தக்கூடியது. அதற்கு காரணம் உத்தமமாயும், மிருதுவாயும், எவ்வளவு கூட்டத்திலும் ஸுலபமாய் கேட்கக்கூடியதாயும் உள்ள சாரீரம் தான். அதற்குமேல் அவர் எதைப்பாடினாலும் நாமனைவரும் அறிந்துகொள்ளும்படியிருக்கும். வார்த்தையாடுவதும் தெளிவாயிருக்கும். அவர் என் புதுமை ஸமயம் கதை செய்ய நம் நகரத்திற்கு முதல் முதல் வந்தார் என்னும் விஷயத்தில் மிகவும் பெருமைப்படுகிறேன். அவர் நீண்ட காலம் கதை செய்துகொண்டிருக்குமாறு ஸ்ரீ அண்ணாமலையாரை வேண்டிக்கொள்ளுகிறேன்.

K. V. Al. Rm. Ramanathan Chettiar, Member of the Madras Corporation, Madras, 5th December 1939:—

I have known Srimati Saraswati Bai for a very long time. Her name is a household word in every blessed home cf the whole Chettinad. No festivity takes place in our parts without her performance. If at all our Nagarathars have got any taste for music, credit therefor goes mainly, if not solely, to Sri. Saraswati Bai. It is very pleasant for me to flatter myself that my house was the very first in which she may be deemed to have given her first performance in the Chettinad.

Sri Desamangalam Subramanier, Vynika, 5th December '39:—

ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அம்மாள் அவர்களுடைய ஸங்கீத ஞானமும், கதாகாலக்ஷேப நிபுணதையும், திவ்ய சாரீரமும், ஸாம்பிரதாய பாணியும்—இவற்றையெல்லாம் பல சந்தர்பங்களில் கேட்டு நான் ஆனந்தித்திருக்கிறேன். ஸங்கீத உலகத்தில் பாயம்மாள் ரொம்பவும் உயர்ந்த வஸ்துவென்று எப்போதும் நான் நினைத்துக்கொண்டிருக்கிறேன். அந்த அம்மாளுடைய படத்திறப்பு விழாவைப்பற்றிக் கேள்விப்பட்டு மேன்மேலும் சந்தோஷிக்கிறேன்.

Dr. T. Srinivasaraghavacharyar, Madras, 6th December, 1939:—

Even from her early age Srimati Saraswati had displayed remarkable latent talents in the fine arts of Music and Histrionics. These two sub-divisions, popularly known as Isai and Nattyam, have grown unconsciously in her; and even when in her thirteenth year in 1908 she gave her maiden performance of Garuda Garva Bhangam, where I happened to be present, she struck me to be a remarkable figure who had already reserved a very high class saloon berth in her life's journey in the arts of Music and Harikatha performances. Judging from the angle of vision pertaining to these arts, one would be struck by the unique importance of Harikatha performances, which, to be achieved to perfection, should in itself have a harmonious combination of the special features appertaining to these arts. We see on the stage a number of characters of both sexes performing in a spirit of team work to show off the subtleties running throughout, if they really want to achieve a grand and successful final without tiring the patience or without producing monotony among the audience for about four hours. On the stage, all characters, high or low, have their own fixed or allotted part to play. Even if a minor character should not be up to the mark, the general effect of the whole, is only to that extent, affected. The responsibilities of the Harikatha Bhagavatar are exceptionally heavy, as one and the same person has to combine in his or her own central personality, the same spirit of team work represented by a group of men and women, The Harikatha Bhagavatars have to readily adjust themselves to the various changes of situation and represent the quick changing emotions and feelings of different characters represented. The burden becomes still more heavy when the Bhagavatar is obliged to preach upon themes preponderating in Bhakti Rasam, as is vogue in Indian performances, when he or she will have to harmoniously combine the other Rasas with the former, without surfeit. So Harikatha performance is an art, which excels other allied fine arts like histrionics with its difficulty of approach. Being delighted in the listening to such extraordinary combined skill exhibited by the late lamented Bramhasri Krishna Bhagavatar of Tanjore, from an early age, I was hungering to become at least an imitation, and thus it was that I attempted to take to the stage with enthusiasm. Whether I achieved any degree of success or not in my own personal ambition, providence had decreed that my second ambition should be amply fulfilled in the performances of Srimati C. Saraswati Bai. One could see in this great Bhaghavatar only, the remarkable and inimitable

power of quick adaptability to represent with subtle and accurate refinements such characters of varying and inconsistent types as the high class orthodox Vediar and the low class Pariah in her classic performance of Nandanar Charitram and the varying emotions animating such thoroughly conflicting and extremely different characters, altercating and alternating in the scene of Dhushsana's outrage and Droupathi's call to the Lord of the Universe in her supreme moment of her Life to save her from ignominy and the flash of ideas conveyed by the words "Dwarakavasa" and then "Sarvantaryami" and "Hridayakanda-vasa."

Being a lady, one would be inclined to think that in such moments she excels even the great Krishna Bhaghavatar, by becoming the real Droupathi herself. In the field of Music, which is the golden frame for the glorious picture of Harikatha, Saraswati Bai has her own unique and inimitable excellences. The two prime factors of Sruti and Laya are embodied in her, so much so, it is no wonder that she has earned for herself the Titles of Gayanapatu, Keertana-patu etc., and easily secured an All India fame both in Carnatic and Hindustani systems of Music.

No sketch of the achievements of this great Bhaghavatar would be complete without making a due and full reference to her Guru and Guide Bramhasri Tiruvadi Krishnachar, who had been fully responsible in feeding and maturing the infant genius of Saraswati Bai to its full maturity all blossom to glorify this world with the sweet scent of Bhakti.

May Providence in Its Divine Mercy shower its choicest blessings of long life and sound health on these two great Guru-Sishyas, for the benefit and perennial glory of our Motherland.

Sri. F. G. Natesan, Retired D. T. S. of S.I.Ry., and Ex-Municipal Chairman, Trichinopoly, 6th December, 1939 :—

It was left for Srimati C. Saraswati Bai to break through the intellectual and moral slavery of the past, defy the supercilious world of men and women around her, plunge herself, head and heal, in the ordeal of all sufferings, tortures and heartburns, with an unflinching resolve to respond to the call of the Divine Saraswati with all the love, zeal, devotion and enthusiasm of a maddened and God-intoxicated Bhakti and what is amazing, to have come out of that ordeal unscathed and to realise, in her own life-time, not only the justification of her bold enterprise but also the admiration and esteem of those very persons who

first scoffed at her. She is a pioneer; and today, as the result of her sacrifices and example, thousands of girls and women of the non-professional classes, Brahmins and Non-Brahmins, walk freely over the once forbidden ground and win laurels; with benefit to themselves and to Indian art. Music, dance and drama, the radio and the gramaphone have drawn to them the best talents from highly aristocratic, respectable, and exclusive families down to the humblest cottages. Srimati C. Saraswati Bai has achieved this miracle. She has earned the right, by her meritorious work, persevering service and high character, to a place among the leaders of India's renaissance. She ranks along with the great heroines and makers of New India. What Srimati Sarojini Naidu is in the realm of divine Poetry and Literature, what Srimati Dr. (Mrs.) S. Muthulakshmi Reddi is in the realm of the Medical relief and social reform, that Srimati Saraswati Bai is in the realm of South Indian Music and Harikatha Kalakshepam. The Nation owes a deep debt of gratitude to her.

Srimati C. Saraswati Bai is known all over India and outside and in the Tamil Nad especially; and there is not a single nook or corner where she is not known and admired for her Kalakshepams. Her patrons include Ruling Princes, Rajas, Maharajas and Millionaires, as well as members of the classes and the masses. Persons of eminence, intellectuals, musical savants and litterateurs, have irrespective of caste, creed or colour paid the highest possible tribute to Srimati Saraswati Bai's great mastery of the science and art of Musical expression and the technique of rendering Harikathas, while her wonderfully sweet and rich voice in which she clothes her music, in which she is an adept, whether in the Carnatic or Hindustani style, have evoked universal admiration and appreciation. Above all, her generous nature, charming manners and conversations, devotional outlook and high character have endeared her to her countrymen and women. No wonder she has been showered with praises, honours and titles wherever she is known and she is now heralded as "Gayanapatu," "Kirtanapatu," "Sangita Ratna," "Kirtana Kanteerava," "Sangita Samskrita Vidya Ratna" and so forth. If she had been born in a western country she would have been honoured as a Sarah Bernnardt or a Madame Melba-or if she had been born in the glorious days of ancient India, (who can say she had not, in one of her previous Janmas) she would have adorned the Court of a Bhoja or of a Vikramaditya. In the present dependent condition of India's nationhood, the reward of one's service can only be looked forward in the grateful recognition, love and genuine appreciation of the public; Srimati Saraswati Bai has them in abundance. It is

only fitting that the Premier Musical Association of Madras, the Jagannatha Bhakta Sabha, should give effect to such public appreciation by putting up the portrait of the talented and distinguished lady in their premises in the heart of the metropolis of South India—the scene of her early struggles and final triumph ; and on this occasion, I deem it a very great privilege, as one of Srimati Saraswati Bai's closest friends and admirers for the past 25 years and more, to be allowed the opportunity of paying my humble tribute to her greatness and charm as a pure and unalloyed Musician Artist and Connoisseur. I have drunk deep at the fountain of her music ; I have devoured the rythmetic and soul-stirring expression of her Harikathas ; I have been held up by her marvellous powers of acting (Bavam) during some of the most tense situations in the divine stories she was unfolding ; I have been charmed by the chasteness of her Sanskrit passages whether it was a Sloka sung in all the various modes and shades of the several RAGAMALIKAS in her own sweet and inimitable way, blending into one harmonious whole and inducing a divine ecstacy in her hearers, or a quotation from the Upanishads recited, in the depth of the lower octave, in all the solemnity of a Sankaracharya or the perfect rendering of the "Sankalpam" mantra to a bewildered Subhadra in the role of the great and eternal Vedic Lord of music and action—Sri Narada ; I have seen her, in her Kalaskepams, put great actors in the histrionic field to shame, by her masterly impersonation of the characters of a Ravana, a Hanuman or a Garuda, a giant or a cooing bird, a Bhakta or a scoffer, a lover or a libertine, a God or a Goddess, a Saint or a sinner, man or woman, King or peasant, with equal ease and yet remain in her decorous Sari—"rich but not gaudy"—the sweet, simple, generous and loving Lady Bhagavathar she has been and is to day. May God and the Divine Mother Sri Raja Rajeswari Saraswati bless and grant to this devotee of theirs long life, happiness, peace, joy and all prosperity and an abiding place in the Heart of Hindustan for all time.

"Guru Devo Bhawa" "Acharya Devo Bhawa". These are sayings of divine import and no true Hindu ever can forget them. Saraswati Bai the child of God and a true Bakthai naturally has borne them in her head all her life with all the respect, veneration and true allegiance she owes to the quiet, unobtrusive, silent hand that has been the chosen instrument of God to direct her education in the great art she has professed, watch her progress with paternal attention and care, and to day remains her constant and faithful guide, philosopher and friend. To her Guru and Acharya, Brahma Sri T. Krishna Achar, we owe a debt of gratitude for all that he has done to give India a " Saraswati Bai" and as long

as the name of Gayanapatu, Kirtanapatu, Sangita Samskrita Vidya Ratna C. Saraswati Bai endures, so long will endure the name of this good, old and venerable Acharya.

Sri. L. Ananthier, Editor 'Indonesan', 6th December 1939 :—

ஸஜ்ஜனர்களுடைய ஹிருதய கமலத்திற் பதிவிக்கும் பேரறிவை ஊட்டிவரும் கைங்
கர்யமே தான் ஜன்மமெடுத்ததன் பலன் எனக்கருதிய பாவையர் திலகங்களில் ஸ்ரீமதி சரஸ்
வதிபாய் அவர்களைப் பாருலகம் பாராட்டாமல் இருப்பதற்கில்லை. "தோன்றிற் புகழொடு தோ
ன்றுக," என்று கூறிய பொய்யாமொழிப்புலவரின் திருவாக்குக்கிணங்க, ஸ்ரீமதி சரஸ்வதிபாயம்
மாளின் புகழ் இந்தப்பரத கண்டத்திலும் இதற்கப்பாலுள்ள பிரதேசங்களிலும் பரவிப்
பிரகாசிக்கின்றது. பாலபருவம் முதற்கொண்டே ஸ்ரீமதிபாயம்மாள் கல்வி நலம்வாய்ந்த பெரி
யாரை அடுத்து அருங்கலை கற்றுக் கான வித்யா பாரங்கதையென உலகோர் பரிவுடன் புகழ,
காயனபடு, கீர்த்தனபடு முதலாய கௌரவப்பிருதுகளைத் தாங்கி மக்களை உய்விக்கும் உத்தம
ஸேவையில் ஈடுபட்டிருப்பதை அறியாதாரிலர்.

சொல்வன்மையும் பொருள்வளமும் விளங்க ஸத்கதா சிரவணர்களுக்கு நல்விருந்
தூட்டும் தூயத்தொண்டினைக்கையாண்டு வருகிறார்கள். கனமும் நயமும் வாய்ந்த சாரீரம்; வசீ
கரமான தோற்றம்; மனோரஞ்சித இனிமை; மாண்பு மிக்கவசனம்; பரவசப்படுத்தும்பக்திரஸம்;
புன்முறுவல் பூத்த சுந்தரவதனம்; அருவருப்புக்கிடங் கொடாச்சிராவியச்சிறப்பு; இவற்றில்
தலைசிறந்து விளங்குகின்றார் நமது பாயம்மாள்.

ஸ்ரீமதி பாயம்மாள் கல்விக்கலனே கலனாகக்கொண்டவர்; ஆதலின், அவர் அரங்கத்
தின்மீது ஆரோஹணிப்பது அனைவர்க்கும் மனோஹரமாயிருக்கும். பக்தி சிரத்தையில்லாதவர்
களும் வெறுப்பு அற்று விருப்பு உறுவர். எல்லார் கண்ணும் மனமும் குளிர்ந்து குவியும். இத்
தனைவைபவங்களும் இனிய குரலும் வாய்ந்த மாது கதை சொல்லுமளவில் காட்டும் அபிநயம்
யாவர் மனத்தையுங் கவரும்.

ஆதலின், இவருடைய உருவப்படத்தை சென்னை ஜகந்நாத சபையில் நிலைநிறுத்தி,
இவருடைய பயற்சியும் பெருமையும் தலைமுறை தலைமுறைக்கு நல்லுதாரணமாக விளங்க
வைப்பதை யெண்ணி நான் மிகச்சந்தோஷிக்கிறேன்.

ஸ்ரீ.W. துரைசாமி ஐயங்கார் மனமுவந்து ஸ்ரீமதி சரஸ்வதிபாயின் உருவப்படத்தை
சென்னை ஜகந்நாதபக்த ஸபையில் நிலைநிறுத்த முன்வந்ததனாலேயே அவ்வம்மையின் பெருமை
விளங்குகின்றது. அதனினும் அதிகம் நான் சொல்லவும் வேண்டுமோ; சுபம்!

Sri. Papa Venkatramiah, Violinist, Tyagarayanagar, 6th December, 1939 :—

ஸ்ரீ ஜெகன்னாதபக்த சபையில் இந்தமாதம் 16ம் தேதி ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அம்மாள்
அவர்களின் படம் திறக்கப்போகிற விஷயத்தை அறிந்து நான் மிகவும் சந்தோஷமடைகிறேன்.

ஸ்ரீமதிஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அம்மாள் அவர்கள் சென்ற 30 வருஷங்களுக்கு மேற்பட்ட
காலமாக ஸங்கீத உலகத்திற்கு ஒரு பெரிய திலகம்போல் விளங்கி வந்திருக்கிறார். அவருடைய

சாரீர மாதுரியத்தையும், பாடும் அழகையும், கதை சொல்லும் சாதுரியத்தையும், கேட்டு மகிழாதார் யாருமேஇல்லை. அவர் வித்வத்கோஷ்டியினருடைய புகழையும் சம்பூர்ணமாக அடைந்திருக்கிறார்.

எனது குருவாகிய காலஞ்சென்ற ஸ்ரீ கோவிந்தசாமி பிள்ளையவர்கள் ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அம்மாள் அவர்களின் காலக்ஷேபத்தில் ரொம்பவும் குதூகலத்தை யடைந்தவர். எனக்குத்தெரிந்து என்னுடைய குரு ஸ்ரீமதி சரஸ்வதிபாய் அம்மாள் அவர்களுக்கு, ஒருவாரத்திற்குள்ளேயே இரண்டு முறை ராமதாஸ் சரித்ர காலக்ஷேபத்தை திருச்சிராப்பள்ளி சபையில் ஏற்பாடுசெய்து தன் சொந்தச்செலவில் சுமார், ரூ 500/- பொருமான தோடாவை சன்மானம் செய்திருக்கிறார்.

அந்தம்மாளுக்குக் கொடுத்திருக்கும் பட்டங்களும், பிருதுகளும் எல்லாவிதத்திலும் தக்கவைகள்.

Sri. Embar Srirangachariar Bhagavatar, Chidambaram, 6th December 1939 :—

१ गानं भावलयादिभिर्विलसितं श्रुत्वाच यस्याः पिकाः
निन्दन्ति स्वगिरां परां मधुरतां व्रीडाप्रशान्तोत्सुकाः ।
संगीतामृतवर्षणोत्सुकसुधीवृन्दाशिषा व्यापिनी
यस्याः कीर्तिरतीत सर्वभुवना जीयात् शतंसा समाः ॥

२ वीणावादतिरस्कृतिप्रकटित प्रख्यात वाङ्मञ्जुला
भाषानेकनिरूपणेऽति कुशाला पर्यायभारत्यसौ
प्राचीनाश्रितवर्त्मना हरिकथोपन्यास नैपुण्यगा,
प्राज्ञी साच सरस्वती विजयतां रामप्रसादाच्चिरम् ॥

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३ सङ्गीतशास्त्र निपुणाऽपि सरस्वती भाय्
अंभोजनाभहरयोश्चरित प्रयोगे !
विश्वातिशायितरसोदयतुष्टगोष्ठी
प्राग्वर्तिनी भवतु मंगलदेवतेव ॥

யதார்த்தமான பிருதுகளைப் பெற்று விளங்கும் ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அம்மாள், தன் இனிய கானங்களாலும், ப்ரவசனங்களாலும், ரஸிகஜனமனங்களாகிற சகோரங்களை, ஸந்தோஷப்படுத்தும் சந்திரிகையாய் விளங்கிவருகிறார். உண்மையான கர்னாடக ஸங்கீதத்தையும், ஹிந்துஸ்தானி ஸங்கீதத்தையும் தனித்தனியே ரஸானுகுணமாய்ப் பாடியும், ஸம்ஸ்கிருதம், மஹாராஷ்ட்ரம், தமிழ், தெலுங்கு, கன்னடம் முதலிய பல பாஷைகளில் பூர்ணமான ஞானத்துடன், அந்தந்த பாஷைகளையும் ஸந்தர்ப்பங்களுக்குத் தக்கவாறு உபயோகித்து, உயர்தரமான ப்ரவசனங்களைச் செய்தும், ப்ராசீன ஸம்ப்ரதாயத்தின் முறை தவறாமல், ஹரிஹர கதாகாலக்ஷேபங்களை, பக்திரஸம் ததும்பச் செய்துவருவதை நாம் கேட்டுச் சிரவணானந்தம் அடைந்துவருகிறோம்.

Sri Sadagopacharyar of Srirangam, Bhagavatar, Tyagarayanagar, 6th December 1939 :—

உலகத்தில் எல்லா வித்யைகளிலும், இந்தக் 'கதை செய்வது' என்பது ஒரு பெரிய விஷயம். ஸங்கீதக்கச்சேரி செய்வதானால் கேவலம் சங்கீதத்தில் மட்டில் பயிற்சி இருந்தால் போதும். இதற்கோ ஸங்கீதம், தமிழ், ஸம்ஸ்க்ருதம், தெலுங்கு, கன்னடம், மஹாராஷ்ட்ரம் முதலிய பாஷைகளில் ஞானம் அவசியம் வேண்டியிருக்கிறது.

ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அவர்களுக்கோ, மேற்கண்ட எல்லாவிஷயங்களிலும் பரிபூர்ணமான ஞானமிருப்பதோடு, சாரீரத்தின் இனிமை, ப்ரவசன ஸாமர்த்யம், பாவப்ரகாசம்— முதலியவை ஒருங்கே சேர்ந்திருப்பது ஸுப்ரஸித்தம்.

இவர்களைப் பற்றி எழுதுவது என்று ஆரம்பித்தால் புத்தகங்களாகப் பல எழுதலாமாகையால், அவகாசமின்மையைக் கருதி இதோடு நிறுத்துகிறேன்.

Sangita Bhupati Maharajapuram Sri R. Viswanatha Aiyar, Kumbakonam, 7th December 1939 :—

எனக்கு ஸ்ரீமதி அம்மாள் அவர்களை வெகுகாலமாக நன்றாகத்தெரியவரும். ஸ்த்ரீகள் ஹரிகதா காலக்ஷேபம் செய்வது என்பதற்கு ஆரம்பம் அவர்கள் தான்.

கதைக்கு வேண்டிய அம்சங்களில் ஸம்ஸ்கிருத ஞானமானது மிகவும் அவசியமேயாகும். அது விஷயம் அவர்களுடைய குரு ஸ்ரீ கிருஷ்ணாசாரியார் அவர்களுடைய அனுக்ரகத்தால் அவர்களுக்குப் பூர்ணமாகக் கிடைத்திருக்கிறது.

மேலும் பாடும் திறமை, அந்த அம்மாளுடைய சாரீரத்தில் வரும்பொழுது மற்றவர்களிடமில்லாத செயல்கள் ரொம்பவும் மேன்மையாகவே இருக்கும். அத்துடன் இந்துஸ்தானி ஸங்கீதத்திலும் அந்த அம்மாளின் பாடும்திறமை ரொம்பவும் அபரிமிதமாகவே இருக்கிறது.

Sri K. Vasudevacharyar, Mysore Palace Vidwan, Mysore, 7th December 1939 :—

श्रमजलकणतारकितं घोऽकखुरधूतधूलिधूसरितम् ।
अन्यादृशलावण्यं धन्याःपश्यन्ति पार्थसूतमुखम् ॥

श्रीमती सरस्वती बायीनाम्नी साध्वीमणि : श्रीमन्मद्रपुरवासिनी इयमाबाल्यं सौशील्याद्युपेता प्राप्ते वयसि सद्गुरुसंनिधावभ्यस्य संगीतं सहित्यं च भगवत्कृपया तयोः समीचीनतरं ज्ञानं लेभे । अथैकदा स्वार्जितज्ञानसार्थक्यं कथं भवेदिति विचिन्त्य "सततं कीर्तयन्तो माम्" "मद्भक्ता यत्र गायन्ति" इत्यादि भगवदुक्तिसारं, तथा "नामकीर्तने अनुदिन माळ्पगळुवेगे नरक भयगलुण्टे "कमलनाभन पाडि पोगळद संगीत गार्दभ रोदनवो" इत्यादि भागवतोक्तसारं च वारं वारं स्मारं स्मारं श्रीमद्भागवतादिमहापुराणान्तर्गत वक्तृ

श्रोतृजन्मसाफल्यहेतुभूतकथादिकं गुरुमुखेन संगृह्य अभ्यस्य च तत्सहकारितया संगीतं साहित्यं च तत्र तत्र संयोज्य लोकानन्दमपि भगवदाराधनमेव मत्वा स्वदेशविदेशप्रख्यातसभासु राजसंस्थानेष्वपि सुशारीरजन्यरागालापनं देशकालपरिस्थितिमनुसृत्य कीर्तनार्थप्रवचने वाक्चातुर्यं च संप्रदर्श्य तत्र तत्र श्लाध्यवस्त्राभरणादीनि प्रशस्तपत्रिकाश्च संपाद्य प्रख्यातिशालिनी विराजते। विद्याविनयादि गुणगण भूषितामेनां कीर्तनप्रियो भक्तवत्सलः श्रीपार्थसारथिः सुचिरमवतादित्याशास्महे।

Sri R. K. Parthasarathi M.A., **Dip. in French and German, 7th December '39 :—**

॥ पञ्चरत्नमाला ॥

१ संस्थित्या कमलासनस्य वदने संचारबद्धा चिरं
हित्वा नित्यनिवासनिर्गतरसं लोकं निजं भारती।
गां प्राप्तेव सरस्वति! त्वमधुना नूनं विपश्चिद्ब्रुवान्
प्रत्याविष्कुरुषे पशून् कुकथकान् शार्दूलविक्रीडितम्॥

२ बुधजनबहुमान्या त्वं हि मर्त्येषु धन्या
विदितविविधभाषा भक्तिसंरुद्धदोषा।
शुभगुणकलयित्री सत्कथां संविधात्री
दिशिविततसमज्ञामालिनी गानविज्ञा॥

३ जीयाः कृष्णाचार्य! धन्योऽसि नूनं
यत्ते विद्या साधुपात्रं समेत्य।
शिष्यामेतां वाग्मिवर्गाग्रगण्यां
मुच्चैरुच्चैः शालिनी वर्धतेऽत्र॥

४ प्रज्ञासुगन्धसरणैर्भ्रमरीनिनाद-
माधुर्यसान्द्रहृदयंगमगीतिजालैः।
आकृष्य देवि! सुमते! निखिलान् रसज्ञान्
नित्यं वसन्ततिलकश्रियमाबिभर्षि॥

५ भ्रूकुट्या दर्शयन्ती नवरसविततिं नाटयन्ती मनोज्ञं
गायन्ती भावपूर्णं सगमकमधुरं पावयन्ती मनुष्यान्।
सुश्लोकैः स्पष्टवर्णैर्हरिगुणकथनैः कीर्तयन्ती च तत्त्वं
स्मेरास्यां त्वां सुवेषां मम मनसि सदा स्रग्धरां भावयेऽहम्॥

Sri R. Sarasakavi Appannachari, B.A., **7th December 1939 :—**

प्रशस्तिपत्रिका ।

सरस्वति ! ब्रह्मवधूसमत्वं न केवलं नाम्नि तवेति मन्ये ।
ज्ञाने विशुद्धेप्यपवर्गमार्गं संरोध्यबोधान्धतमःप्रदीपे ॥ १ ॥

सुधासध्रीची वाक् विशदपदविन्यासमुभगा परं तत्तद्भावोचितनटनरीतिर्हृदयहृत् ।
अहो ! गाने दाक्ष्यं सरसतरकण्ठेन मधुरं अथोच्चैर्वाग्मित्वं सहृदयहृदाकर्षणपटु ॥ २ ॥

पुराणादौ प्राज्यं फलयति मतिस्ते परिचयं सुबोधं व्याख्यानं पुनरुपकथाभिश्च रुचिरम् ।
अखण्डं पुण्यानां फलमिति वितर्को मम दृढं गुणानां सर्वेषामिति मिलनमेकत्र तव यत् ॥ ३ ॥

चित्रार्पितेव परिषत्सकला यदास्ते तेनैव केवलमलं प्रकटीकृता ते ।
अन्यादृशी निपुणता कथनप्रकारे वाचालता मम पुनः पुनरुक्तिरेव ॥ ४ ॥

कालिदास इति गां गता पुरा नामरूपभिदया हि मां जगत् ।
वेद नेति तदुभे सरस्वती नान्यथाकृतवती त्वयि स्थिता ॥ ५ ॥

'सङ्गीतमपि साहित्यं सरस्वत्याः स्तनुद्वयम्' ।
युगपत् तद्द्वयस्यापि रसज्ञा त्वं हि भाग्यभृत् ॥ ६ ॥

त्यागराजमुखभक्तसन्तति व्याततीः बहुविधाः कृतीः स्वयम् ।
प्रस्फुटाक्षरपदाभिरुक्तिभिः भूरि भावभरितं सुकीर्तनात् ॥ ७ ॥

स्थाने त्वं 'गायनपटुः' इत्युच्चबिरुदञ्चिता ।
तथैव 'कीर्तनपटुः' इत्यन्वर्थः स्तवस्तव ॥ ८ ॥

'उद्धरे दात्मनाऽऽत्मानं' इति गीतावचोऽनुगा ।
उद्धरस्यात्मनाऽऽत्मानं भगवन्नाम कीर्तनात् ।

न केवलं तद्भक्तजनान् श्रोतॄनुद्धारयस्यपि ॥ ९ ॥
तारकाय परिकल्पने कलौ केवलं हि हरिनामकीर्तनम् ।

साधु चेत्कृतमदोऽस्ति किं पुनः तादृशं त्वदपरो नसाधयेत् ॥ १० ॥
लोकोद्धाराय नारीयमरोगदृढगात्रभाक् ।

शरदां जीवतु शतं इति संप्रार्थये हरिम् ॥ ११ ॥

Sahitya Visarada Kasibhatta Sri Subbiah Sastri Garu, Cocoanda, 7th December, '39 :—

సన్నుత జీవితము

రుచిర బిరుదావళీ వైభవముతో, చెన్ననగరాన చెన్నారుచున్న శ్రీమతి సి. సరస్వతీభాయి మహాశయను, నేను సుమారు ముప్పది వత్సరములనుండి బాగుగా నెఱింగియున్నవాఁడను. ఈ విదుషీలలామ ప్రస్తుతము మన భారత వసుంధరను ప్రసిద్ధిగాచిన, సతీమణులలో నగ్రస్థానమలంకరింపఁదగిన, సుగుణసంపదతోడను, పాండితీ వైభవముతోడను, అలరారుచున్నయిది సందియము లేదు.

ఈ గాయనపటు, గానపాటవము అనన్యసామాన్య కలా విలసితము. ఈ కీర్తనపటు కంఠస్వరము కోకిలకాకలీరవమును మఱపించును. ఈ సంగీతరత్నము సుభాషితరీతి పండితులకుగూడ వింతగొల్పును. ఈ సంస్కృత విద్యారత్నము సాహితీ వైభవము గీర్వాణవాణీ నిపుణుల వెఱగందఁజేయును. ఈ సంగీత విద్యావిశారద కాలక్షేప సమయాన ప్రదర్శించు లలితాభినయ సరణి నవరసములఁ దళుకొత్తఁజేయును.

పెక్కుభాషలేల ? ఈ సంగీత కలాకోవిద చక్కని రతనంపు ముక్కురతో గాంతు వీను రవల కమ్మలతో సౌభాగ్య తిలక భాసితమగు ఫాలభాగముతో అళికుల నీల కోమలమగు వేణీలతికతో కౌశేయ శోభితమగు దేహలతికతో; జిరుతలగుచే చిరతలతో మాక్షికాతి మధురములగు నీటుమాటలతో, లోకమోహనమగు గాన నాదముతో, సనాతనార్యరమా నాగరకతా మర్యాదల సాక్షాత్కరింపఁజేయుచు, సభాస్థలిని నిలిచియున్నప్పుడు చతురానన సదనమునుండి మానవలోకమున కవతరించిన భారతీమాత యట్లు తేజరిల్లుచుండును.

మఱియొక విశేషము, ఈ శేముషీ భూషిత, పంజర కీరమువలె గురులు కఱపిని పలుకుల గంఠపాఠ మొనరించి, తిరుగ నుచ్చరించు భాగవతునివలెఁ గాక, సహజమేధా శక్తిచే నెప్పటి కప్పుడు సమయోచితముగా నశ్రుతాపూర్వ మనోహర భావముల వెల్లడింప నేర్పుగల సుధీవిలసిత. నేనట్టి సొంగసుబాసల నెన్నిటినో యీపె కాలక్షేపకాలమున వినియుంటిని.

ఈ గాంధర్వ విద్యాప్రవీణ „ప్రపేదిరే ప్రాక్తన జన్మవిద్యాః" అని పార్వతీ విద్యాభ్యాసమును గూర్చి కాళిదాస కవివరుడు వర్ణించినట్లు, ఈ యమ్మ స్వయముగా గాన విద్యయందు సదృశ

వైశద్యమును గడించిన ప్రౌఢ. మఱియు, మధ్వశ్రీ పండితవర, టి. కృష్ణమాచార్యులవారియొద్ద సాహిత్యాది సారస్వత రచనల నభ్యసించి వానియందు సమాన ప్రావీణ్యమును సంపాదించిన వివేక ధురీణ.

ఈ సతీమణి విద్యాగరిమచేతనే ప్రఖ్యాతిని గనియుండలేదు. ఈ దయావతి తాసంపాదించిన సంపదతో సోదరాది బంధుజనన కుటుంబములను భరించుచు అతిధ్యభ్యాగతప్రబృతి సాధుజనుల గారవించుచు, పుణ్యతీర్థ సందర్శనాది ధర్మకార్యము లొనర్చుచు, బీదసాదల నాదరించుచు, ఈ రీతిగా నిజజీవిత సుమసౌరభముల దిగంతముల వ్యాపింపజేసిన వదాన్యతా శోభితగా గూడనున్నది.

ఇట్టి సుగుణ శోభితలగు విదుషీలలామల జీవితములే భారత మహీమండలమున కమూల్య మండనములు, కావున, శ్రీమతి సరస్వతీభాయి మహోదయయొక్క పవిత్ర చరిత్రము శాశ్వతముగా నుండుటకు స్నేహసుందరమగు సువర్ణచిత్రమును బ్రతిష్ఠించి, మనకాసాధ్వీమణి యెడఁగల గౌరవభావమును వ్యక్తముచేయుట యెంతయు శ్రేయస్కరమగు కార్యము.

మర్యాదాభిజ్ఞులగు శ్రీజగన్నాధభక్త సభవారు, శ్రీమతి సరస్వతీభాయిగారి ఛాయాపటమును నెలగొల్పి లోకస్తుతికి బాత్రులైరి. గుణవతులగు సోదరీమణుల గారవించుటయే సత్యమగు మానవ కృత్యము. దయామయుఁడగు శ్రీనివాసుఁడు, శ్రీమతి సరస్వతీభాయిగారికిని, ఆ విద్యావతిపై గౌరవాభిమానములఁ జూపు పుణ్యాత్ములను, సకలైశ్వర్యముల నొసంగి కాపాడుగావుత.

ఓం తత్సత్.

Mridangam Vidwan, Sri Venu Naickar Madras, 7th December 1939 :—

ஸ்ரீ ஸரஸ்வதிபாயம்மாள் அவர்களுடைய ஸங்கீதமும் ஹரிகதையும் மிகவும் உயர்வான இடத்திலிருப்பவை. நான் ஸ்ரீலக்ஷ்மணாசார் ஸ்ரீபஞ்சாபகேசசாஸ்திரிகள் முதலியபல பாகவதர்களுக்கும், அநேகம் பாடகர்களுக்கும், மிருதங்கம்வாசித்திருக்கும் அநுபவத்தில் ஸ்ரீபாயம்மாள் ஹரிகதையில், உருப்படிக்கு அவதாரிகை வைப்பதும் உருப்படிபாடுவதும் அதை விவரிப்பதும் ஒன்றை யொன்று இணைந்து, பரம ருசியாய் இருக்கும். ஸங்கீதமேளம் ச்ருதிலய சுத்தமாயும், நாதத்தோடு பாவசுத்தமாய் பாடும் பொழுது, மிருதங்கம் அந்தஸங்கீதம் கெடாமல் வாசிப்பது மிகவும் சிரமம். இதை நானே பலதடவைகளில் அனுபவித்தும் என் குரு ஸ்ரீதக்ஷிணாமூர்த்திபிள்ளை அவர்கள் பலதடவைகளில் ஸ்ரீ பாயம்மாள் கதைக்கு வாசித்திருப்பதால், அடிக்கடி சொல்லியும் கேட்டிருக்கிறேன். மற்றவர்கள் பாடும்பொழுது கூசாமல் மிருதங்கம் வாசிக்கும் எனக்கு, ஸ்ரீ பாயம்மாள் பாடும்பொழுது, மிருதங்கத்தைக் கீழே வைத்துவிட்டு, ஆனந்தமாய் அந்தப் பாட்டைக் கேட்டுக்கொண்டிருந்தாலே போதுமென்று தோன்றும்.

The Hon'ble Mr. M. Ct. M. Chidambaram Chettiar, Madras, 8th December, 1939 :—

Srimati Saraswati Bai has been known to me from my very early days. After her entry on the platform, her aim of elevating Kathakalakshepams to a rank above all other avocations has been achieved. Her scientific way of dealing with puranic stories and at the same time suiting them to popular audience has earned her great fame, while her music and versatile quotations accompanying the kathas have placed her in the first rank among katha performers. I wish her success and all prosperity.

Sri. M. R. M. Periannan Chettiar, Karaikudi, 8th December 1939 :—

ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அவர்களின் படத்திறப்புவிழாவைப் பற்றிக் கேள்விப்பட்டு, அளவு கடந்த சந்தோஷம் அடைந்தேன். அதன் சம்பந்தமாய் ஏற்பாடு செய்திருக்கும் கமெமொரேஷன் புஸ்தகத்திற்கு நான் ரூ. 25-க்குச் செக் அனுப்பித்திருக்கிறேன்; பெற்றுக் கொள்ளவும்.

LATER MESSAGES.

Sri G. N. Balasubramanian B.A., (Hons) Sangita Vidwan, Triplicane, 9th December 1939 :—

Srimati C. Saraswati's mellifluous and ductile voice easily adapts itself to the requirements of both the Hindustani and Carnatic styles of music. The pristine purity of her rendering the songs of the two systems without the slightest tendency to an admixture of both has earned the deserving admiration of all Vidwans. I have heard her on many occasions both as a platform singer and as a Harikatha Performer. She excels herslf in each. The presentation of the songs with the appropriate emphasis on the Sahitya and Bhava and fine finish is worthy of all praise. Again, as a Harikatha performer, her great scholarship in Sanskrit, her exquisite taste and her graceful and dignified exposition have been the envy of many others in the field. The proposal to unveil such a great Lady Bhagavatar's Portrait is highly commendable.

Sri T. Chowdiah, Mysore Palace Violin Vidwan, Mysore, 9th December 1939 :—

My revered Guru, Gana Visarada Bidaram Krishnappa often told me that he had attended Srimati Saraswati Bai's performances and felt immense joy and had never heard such rapturous music as hers, at any time of his life. I myself can say with much confidence that there are very few musicians who are equal to her and that her talents are extraordinary. I have the greatest pleasure to know that the Egmore Jagannatha Bhakta Sabha has arranged to get Srimiti Saraswati Bai's Portrait unveiled on the 16th instant, in recognition of her brilliant attainments.

The Rajah of Ramnad, Madras, 11th December 1939 :—

The honor that is done to Gayanapatu, Kirtanapatu, Srimati Saraswati Bai by getting her Portrait unveiled at the Jagannatha Bhakta Sabha is well deserved. She has endeared herself to one and all the music-lovers by her sweet melody. An erudite Sanskrit scholar that she is, her katha kalakshepams have ever been entertaining ; and she is pre-eminent for her outstanding ability in her art. My father who was an ardent lover of music had a great admiration for her. He even went to the extent of commending her to the Mysore Samastanam where she was very much appreciated. I am indeed very happy to hear of the distinction.

Sri Rajamanikkam Pillai, Violinist, Kumbakonam, 10th December 1939:—

தற்போது ஸ்ரீமதி பாயம்மாளின் படத் திறப்புவிழாவை அவர்களுடைய முன்னிலை யிலேயே கொண்டாடப்படுவது மிகவும் பாக்கியமாகும். ஸ்ரீமதி பாயம்மாளின் யோக்கியதாம் சங்களைப் புகழ நான் திறனற்றவன். எனினும், என்னுடைய ஸந்தோஷத்தையும் வெளிப்பட தெரிவித்துக்கொள்ளாமலிருக்க முடியவில்லை. ஸ்ரீமதி பாயம்மாளின் கதையையும் கானத்தை யும் நான் சிறுபோதிலிருந்தே, அனுபவித்து வந்துகொண்டிருக்கிறேன். அம்மாளுடைய கதையானது இடம் ஸமயம் முதலியவைகளை அனுசரித்து இங்கிதமான இன்சொற்களால் பகவத் குணங்களை புகட்டி பரவசப்படுத்துவதாகும். அவர்களுடைய, கானமானது வாலிபம் வனப்பு வாய்ந்து, ஸ்ருதி சுத்தத்துடனும் சிறந்த கற்பனைகளுடனும் உயரிய வர்ணமெட்டுக் களுடனும் எத்தேசத்தினரையும் எந்த ஸதஸையும் திருப்தி செய்யக்கூடிய வலிமை கொண்டது.

அப்படி உயரிய யோக்யதையுடைய அம்மாளின் திருவுருவப்படத்தை திறக்கும் வைபவத்தால் அந்தமாதிரி ஸ்தானத்தையும் மஹாஜனங்களுடைய ஆதரவையும், அபிமானத் தையும் அடையவேணுமென ஆர்வமடைந்து, ஸங்கீத உலகம் முயல, ஹேதுவாகிறது. ஸ்ரீமதி அம்மாள் கடவுளின் கிருபையால் பூர்ண த்ருடகாத்திரத்துடனும் உத்ஸாகத்துடனும் ஸங்கீத உலகுக்கு இன்பமளிக்க வேணுமென்று எல்லாம்வல்ல இறைவனை பிரார்த்திக் கின்றேன்.

Prof. R. Srinivasan, M.A., Trivandram, 13th December 1939:—

ஸ்ரீமதி, ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அம்மாளின் ஸங்கீதம் உயர்ந்தது. சுருதிசுத்தம், லயசுத் தம், இனிமையான குரல், சிரமமின்றி கண்டத்திருந்து உதிரும் ரவை ஸங்கதிகள், மெச்சத் தக்க மனோதர்மம், 'முதலியவை அம்மாளின் ஸங்கீதத்தில் நிறைந்துள்ளவை. விஷயங்களை எடுத்து உரைப்பதில் அம்மாளுக்குள்ள லாகவமும், ஸாமர்த்தியமும் மிகவும் பாராட்டத்தக்கது. ஸ்ரீ ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அம்மாள் நன்கு படித்தவர்கள். விஷயங்களை நன்குணர்ந்து தன்னுடைய தாக்கி, தன்னுடைய ஆலோசனை சக்தியைக் கொண்டு, அவற்றைப் போஷித்து, புது உருவங் கொடுத்து, தான் சொல்லும் சொற்கள் புது சோபையோடு விளங்கும்படி செய்பவர். அம் மாளின் முகத்திலிருந்து புறப்படும் சொற்கள் ஸ்பஷ்டமாகவும், சப்த சுத்தத்தையுள்ளதாகவும் இருக்கின்றன. பாயம்மாள் வடஇந்தியப் பாட்டுகளைப் பாடும்போது, அந்தப் பாணியாகவே இருக்கிறது. இவ்வளவு பூர்ண யோக்கியதையுள்ள இவர் எல்லாவித கௌரவத்திற்கும் தகுந் தவர் என்பதை பூர்ண மனதோடு தெரிவிக்கிறேன்.

Mahamahopadhyaya Sri Dandapaniswami Dikshitar, Chidambaram, 14th December 1939:—

ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாயம்மாளின் கதைகளை அண்ணாமலை சர்வகலாசாலை முதலிய பல இடங்களில் பல தடவை நேரில் கேட்டு மிகுந்த திருப்தி அடைந்திருக்கிறேன். கதையின் திறமையையும் வடமொழி தென்மொழிகளில் நல்லபாண்டித்யத்தையும் மற்ற அனேக பாஷைகளின் பரிச்சயத்தையும் சங்கீத அபினய சாஸ்திரங்களின் உயர்ந்த ஞானத்தையும் சொல் சாதுர்யத்தையும் பக்திரஸத்தையும் பூர்ணமாய் ஸ்ரீமதி சரஸ்வதிபாய் அம்மாளின் கதையில் எல்லோரும் ஒரே காலத்தில் அனுபவித்திருப்பது வியக்கத்தக்கதே. ஷை அம்மாளுக்கு ஸ்ரீ நடராஜ மூர்த்தி சகல மனோரதங்களையும் அருள்புரிவார்.

ARTICLES

SRIMATI C. SARASWATI BAI

— THE PIONEER LADY BHAGAVATAR —

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The place of Harikatha in the social and cultural life of Southern India, as also of some other provinces of this essentially religious-minded country, has always been as high as that assigned to the recitation of the Vedas. It may be roughly described as the attractive exposition, with the aid of music, of the Divine purpose as fulfilled in the hallowed lives of India's worshipped incarnations, great and small; and the person who gives this kind of performance is known as Bhagavathar.

Origin of Modern Style of Harikatha

Whatever might have been the method and manner of Harikatha previous to the 18th century, there is no doubt that we owe its modern style and improved technique to the impact with the cultural genius of Maharashtra which contributed the Sakhi, Dandi, Ovi, Dhanakshari, Mattakokilam, Anjanagitam, Jula and other varieties of musical composition which constitute a fitting prelude to every kalakshepam today. Tracing the evolution of this modern method of popular entertainment during the last three quarters of a century, we learn that it was inspired by one Morgar Bava, a Marathi scholar and music vidwan who seems to have been invited by one of the ruling princes of Tanjore to entertain and instruct not only the royal household but also the enlightened population of that historic city, the hub of South Indian civilisation. It speaks volumes of the dynamic force of this great personality, that, handicapped as he was by a foreign tongue which had nothing in common with the language of the place, his influence not only extended among the learned few but percolated to the mass of the population also. There were a few pandits in Tanjore who found, in the respected Bava's forceful exposition, much useful material which could be assimilated with advantage into their indigenous system of religious entertainment. One of them was the famous Krishna Bhagavatar, whose quick grasp and fertile imagination enabled him to give a new orientation to the form and content of Harikatha performances in the Tamil country. Saraswati Bai represents the nearest approach to this magnetic personality.

The Equipment of a Bhagavatar

The role of the Bhagavatar, which the subject of this article has chosen for herself, would seem, on first thoughts, to be easy to fill; but, to attain sustained

success in this profession, it requires qualifications many and varied. A personality, tolerable if not attractive, with fine voice, clear expression and a practical working knowledge of good music may be said to be the sine qua non of a Bhagavatar. A ready and refined wit, an instinctive perception of the boundaries of the forbidden ground of coarseness and vulgarity, a quite up-to-date knowledge of current events in all fields of activity, and a clear grasp of the essentials in regard to live questions of the hour agitating the public mind, combined with the ability and imagination to make suitable and delicate use of them to add pep and punch to his exposition and the discretion always to avoid giving pointed offence to anybody among the audience, are the next requisites for his success. If to these are added a knowledge of Sanskrit and, in this multilingual province, a nodding acquaintance with the chief Dravidian vernaculars with a smattering of English, and above all, the peculiar intonations characteristic of the linguistic divisions of this Presidency, expressive features to depict, by action and gesture, the moods and feelings of the characters and the incidents of the story and the natural gift of spicy recital to sustain the interest of the audience, the Bhagavatar will easily attract packed houses. Any reader who has attended Saraswati Bai's Kalakshepams will readily see that she possesses in abundance these merits as well as extensive practical knowledge of the northern and southern systems of music. Her clear-cut analytical enunciation of verses in many languages including the majestic syllables of hoary Sanskrit and the extraordinary force and effect of her virile expression are the envy and despair of Bhagavatars of both sexes. It is the combined effect of all these qualifications, coupled with the supreme quality or assonance in diction and melody as also the fact that she is the first woman to take to this profession that gives her a unique place in this popular section of musical entertainment.

Early Struggles and Later Successes

The incidents of her life, such as are of interest to the general reader, are very few and are not uncommon. She was born at Gooty, Bellary district, in the year 1896. Her father Mr. G. Rama Rao. a Madhwa Brahmin, was employed in the M.&S.M. Railway as a station master. She married Mr. C. Raghavendra Rao, son of Mr. Chakrapani Rao, an officer of the Police department, Salem. Even at her early age, she showed much promise of musical talent and, it is said, was always in demand at domestic gatherings of ladies, and her naturally fine voice, her precocious grasp of melodic sweeps and facility of rendering made her the cynosure of all female eyes. Vidwan Krishnachar, then a Pandit, in the Christian College,

a native of Tiruvadi and an erudite Sanskrit scholar, steeped in the glorious traditions of Carnatic music, was the first to realise the immense possibilities of this young prodigy; and he conceived the original idea of striking out a new path by training her as a Harikatha performer on the model of the late Krishna Bhagavatar of Tanjore whom he always admired as an ideal. Saraswati Bai made her debut when she was barely eleven at Mylapore; and the writer who was present at the function can personally testify to the extraordinary admiration which the pioneer girl-Bhagavatar's performance evoked. Although her appearance in this new role was at first looked upon by the professionals as the harmless hobby of a precocious child, admired more for its novelty than for its intrinsic worth, they gradully realised that she was a successful rival seriously threatening their income and even livelihood. These so-called Bhagavatars who are supposed to sing the glories of God did not hesitate to use her natural handicap of sex and youth against her. But in the end her superior merits prevailed. Among those public-spirited ladies and gentlemen who actively assisted and encouraged her in her novel venture were Sir and Lady Sankara Nair and particularly the late Chitti Babu Nayudu who had an established reputation for knowledge of music. Relying on the strength of their support, she was able to fight single-handed the solid phalanx of professional envy and hostility. She then went on from triumph to triumph and her success was permanently assured.

Appreciation from North India

Her name came to be known even beyond the frontiers of this province. It was after she gave a performance in Bombay that the late Pandit Vishnu Digambar, then Principal of the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya gave her publicly the title of 'Gayan Patu' (expert musician) in token of his admiration of her musical attainments. Some time after, the late Lokamanya Tilak conferred on her at a public meeting, the title of 'Keertan Patu' (expert in Harikatha performance; the term 'keertana' means Harikatha in Maharashtra) in admiration of her extraordinary powers of exposition. She now stands out a unique figure in the musical world as the pioneer lady Bhagavatar in India whose performances are very much appreciated by the vidwan and layman alike.

What Contributed to Her Success

A word about her music is called for. We see our vidwans affecting Hindustani music but not being able to do justice to its peculiar style; and cases are not wanting of Hindustani musicians attempting to sing South Indian

compositions with a northern accent, method and style. But Saraswati Bai seems to be the only person who can sing each style in a masterly and impressive fashion without impairing its characteristic individuality or trenching upon the special melodic domain of the other.

We cannot enough admire and congratulate the grit, the iron will and the consciousness of right succeding at last, that has carried Srimati Saraswati Bai though serried ranks of opposition and professional intolerance to the position she now occupies. Here are some points that helped her to do this. She is gifted with a voice of a peculiar fibre. It stands her in good stead in the Harikatha, as well as in a Concert. Again. what is rare in a professional, it is so built as to be responsive to the utmost, in handling the Carnatic and the Hindustani styles of music. Again, it has a wonderful reach, volume, ring, strength and fllexibility. Added to this, she has an instinctively perfect appreciation of time and measure.

Her repertoire is very wide and varied—classic compositions of the masters of the Carnatic style, flanked by lighter creations in Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu and Canarese. This is finely balanced by her musical library of the Northern school—Urdu, Hindi, Hindustani, Guzarati, Maharatti and Persian productions find a prominent place therein.

Her inimitable power of assimilating the substance of whatever she sings and of identifying herself with the spirit and form of the song to the least detail, is a thing apart. Her memory is careful to receive, slow to assimilate but singularly retentive.

Her Unique Style

But more than all these things, she has been blessed with an advantage that has fallen to no other. Her style of performance does not tread upon the various trends that we had been accustomed to. There is the old orthodox style of the Bhagavatars, whose last representative was Mr. Narasimha Bagavathar; there is the style of Mr. Vaithinatha Bhagavatar of Soolamangalam who introduced the practice of performing a series of kalakshepams in connection with the Saivite saints; there is the style of Mr. Chidambara Bhagavatar, with its popular elements. There is the style of the dasars and sadhus that place matter before art and quality. There is the style imported by the Mahrattas from the north, that has come to stay at Tanjore. But Srimati C. Saraswati Bai had chosen, and chosen rightly, a style, that combines in itself

all the best and finest elements of these—the style of the late lamented Brahmasri Krishna Bagavathar of Tanjore, who stands apart in the history of Harikatha in South India.

There are yet other points where Srimati Saraswati Bai stands head and shoulders above the Bhagavatars of South India. Men artists of her profession have the advantage of being accompanied by men, with accordant voices; but this lady has the handicap of being driven to choose men accompanyists for herself. It is needless to dilate upon the defects and diffiiculties of such an arrangement. This makes her sing all the way herself and speak too. No ordinary professional can stand the strain long; and she has been at it for nigh 30 years. Not even her ideal Bhagavatar could claim such wide and deep knowledge of the music of Hindustan as she does. Why speak of the other men in the line?

There is no placee in Southern India where she is not a familiar figure and welcome one too. She had been presented with jewels and robes out of count by musicians of all ranks, nobility and royalty (Travancoue, Mysore and Hyderabad). She is a member of the expert committee of the Music Academy, Madras and has read papers on the Harikatha at the various music conferences since 1927. Last but not least, very few know that her Harikatha materials are far above the best in the field; for, her teacher has given her a course of the kavyas, grammar, logic and philosophy. She is practically the first to create her line and quality; and she holds the flag triumphantly.

శ్రీరస్తు

శ్రీ సరస్వతీకంఠాభరణము

నవరత్నమాల

(పసుమర్తి కృష్ణమూర్తిశాస్త్రి)

శా॥ శ్రీయున్ భారతియున్ భవానియును సంతృప్తాత్మలై సంతత।
శ్రేయారోగ్యచిరాయురాదు లిడుచుం జేకొంద్రుగా కీధరన్।
శ్రీయై భారతియై భవానియయి వాసిం జెందుచున్నట్టి యీ।
శ్రేయోరాశి సరస్వతీసరసిజాక్షీరత్నమ్ముఁ సర్వథా॥

మ॥ సతులున్నారు మనోహరార్థవిలసత్ సాహిత్యవీథిన్ సర ।
స్వతులై కొంద; నారతామృతసరత్ సంగీతధాటిన్ సర ।
స్వతులై వెండియుఁ గొంద; రిందొకట నీ శాస్త్రద్వయం బీ ।
సతతియందుం బరిపూర్ణమై నెగడుటల్ సామాన్యమా చూడఁడీ ॥

మ॥ చదవేరై పొదలున్ ముదంబలర నీ సంగీత సాహిత్య సం ।
పద ప్రత్యక్షసరస్వతీ, యిపుడు నీ భాగ్యంబు వర్ణించుట ।
న్నది చెంగల్వకు జేగురుంబులుముటే యమ్మా యథార్థంబుగాఁ ।
ద్రిదశాచార్యుని వంటి నీగురుడు శ్రీకృష్ణాహ్వయుం డింతకున్ ।
మొదలై ప్రీతిదలిర్ప విష్ణుపదమున్ ముట్టించె నీ చేతనే॥

ఉ॥ మాన్యములా సువర్ణమణిమండిత మండన కోటు లో యసా ।
మాన్యకళాకలాపరుచిమండిత నీకు ! మహాత్ములౌజగ ।
న్మాన్యులకెల్ల మాన్యవయినావుకదమ్మ సరస్వతీసతీ !
ధన్యులు నిన్నుగన్న తలిదండ్రులు !! వారి యదృష్ట మింతయస్ ॥

మ॥ హరినామస్తుతిపాఠముల్ సదివి సర్వార్థంబులన్ సిద్ధులౌ ।
పురుషశ్రేష్ఠుల వృత్తముల్ పరమ సంపూర్ణానురాగంబులం ।
గురియంజేతువనేకవై ఖరుల నీకుంగాక వేరొండ్లకుం ।
దరమే యాగరిమంబు భాగవతసన్తానావతంసంబ, దు
స్తరసంసార పయోధినౌకలట నీ సంగీత సాహిత్యముల్ ॥

ఉ॥ నీ మరియాద, నపేరిమె, నీవినయంబును, నీ మృదూక్తి, నీ ।
నీమము, నీ మనశ్శుచియు, నీ గురుభక్తి విధేయతల్ బుధ ।
స్తోమములెల్ల మెచ్చుకొనుచుం బలుమారులు సంతసింతు ర ।
మ్మా మరి యేమిగావలయు మానవజన్మకు సార్థకంబిదే ॥

శా॥ భోగంబుల్ విడనాడి యాకమలనాభుం బాడి తద్భక్తి సం ।
యోగారూఢ మనస్కవై నెగడు నీ యుత్కృష్టచారిత్రలన్ ।
బాగోగుల్ వివరింపఁ బూనుకొనుటల్ వ్యర్థప్రయత్నంబు ల ।
మ్మా గంభీరతరంబు నీ హృదయధర్మం బింత యూహింపమా ॥

మ॥ పరమానందఖనీ, సుధీవినయసంపచ్ఛాలినీ, మానినీ ।
హరిపాదాశ్రయవైనదానవు కదా ఆ చంద్రతారార్కమై ।

ధరలోనీచరితంబు సాధుజన సన్తానప్రసక్తంబుగాఁ ।
బరగుం గాక యటంచు ధీవరులు సంభావించుచున్నా రిదో ॥

మ॥ నవలా, యీ నవరత్నమాలికను విన్నాణంబుతోఁ దాల్చి మా ।
ధవపాదాబ్జసుధాశన ప్రతతిలో దైవారుమే ప్రొద్దు: భూ
రి విశిష్టం బిది; నిర్మలామరయశశ్శ్రీవేష్టితం బమ్మరో ।
భువి నూ రేడులు గండ్లజూతువుసుమా మువ్మాటి కేఁ దెల్పితిన్ ॥

హరికథ

"జన్తూనాం నరజన్మ దుర్లభం" జన్తువులయందు నరుండై పుట్టుట మిగుల దుర్లభమనుట అందరు నెరిగిన విషయమె. సృష్టికర్తయగు పరమాత్ముడొకడున్నాడని యెరిగి యాతని దయ సంపాదించి ముక్తినొందుటయే నరునకు పరమార్థము. ఈ పరమార్థమును సంపాదించుట కనేక మార్గములున్నవి. వానిలో నీ కాలమునకు దగనది భక్తి. ఇది మిగుల సులభమైన మార్గము. ఈ మార్గమునుబట్టి జీవయాత్ర సాగించుటయందు గలుగుచుండు కష్టనష్ట పరంపరల నోర్చి చివరకు ముక్తులగు మహాత్ముల చరితలను పామరజనములకు జెప్పి వారికి బరమేశ్వరుని యాస్తికతయు భక్తియు బోధించుటయే హరికథ. ఈ హరికథాకథన మంత సులభమైనపని కాదు. ఏల యందురా లోకములో సర్వజ్ఞులైనవా రే నూటికో కోటికో యొకరొక రచ్చటచ్చట నున్నారు. వారున్నజాడయే తెలియుట కష్టము. ఇక మరికొందరు పుట్టినవారు పుట్టినట్లే పెరుగుచు మృగప్రాయులై యడవులలో తిని తిరుగుచున్నారు. వీరు గూడ చాలాతక్కువ మందియే. జనులలో నీరెండు తెగలే గాక మూడవ తెగ మరియొకటి యున్నది. లోకమనగా నీ మూడవ తెగతో నిండియున్నదే. దీనికి జెందినవారు "జ్ఞానలవదుర్విదగ్ధులు" అనగా తెలిసియు దెలియనివారు. "తెలియని నరులకు సుఖముగఁ దెలుపందగు. సుఖతరముగఁ దెలుపఁగ వచ్చుం దెలిసినవారికి-దెలిసియుఁ దెలియని నరుఁదెలుప బ్రహ్మదేవుని వశమా" అని లోకజ్ఞానముగల పెద్దలు నుడివిరి. ఐన వీరు మాత్రము మానవులు కారా?—వీరు గూడ తరింపవలదా?—అను నిట్టి సద్భావముదయింపజొచ్చినది.

ఇది భాగవతధర్మములలోనిది. ప్రతివారును దాము తరించుటయే కాక యన్యులను గూడ దరింపజేయుట. ఈ పరమభాగవత ధర్మప్రచారకులయం దగ్రగణ్యుడు నారదుడు—బ్రహ్మమానసపుత్రుఁడు: దేవతలకెంత ప్రియతముడో రాక్షసులకు గూడ నితడంత ప్రియతముడే కదా! అలాగుననే యేతత్పరమ వైష్ణవ సంప్రదాయకులగు భాగవతులు గూడ విద్వాంసుల నెట్లాకర్షింపగలరో మూర్ఖులను గూడ నట్లే యాకర్షింపగలిగి యుండవలయును. అందువలన ప్రతిభాగవతియు నార

దునివంటివాడై యుండవలసి వచ్చుచున్నది, కాని యిది సంభవమా !!? కాదు. తథాపి సర్వ కాలములయందు నట్టి దైవాంశ సంభూతు లరుదుగా జనించి పండిత పామరలోకములను దరింపఁ జేసి త్రికాలస్మరణీయులగుచున్నారు. వారు సర్వజ్ఞులు. దైవాంశ సంభూతులగు నట్టివారు లోక మును సులభముగ నాకర్షింపగలరు. ఎటువంటి మొరకులనైనను వారు సరియైన మార్గమునకు ద్రిప్పగలవారు: శాస్త్రార్థములును కళాప్రావీణ్యతయు జన్మాంతర సంస్కారవశంబులై వారల యందు విరాజిల్లుచుండును. వారు లోకకళ్యాణ వాంఛాతత్పరులు. అట్టి వారియెదుటబడి యహం కార విశిష్టులగు వారెవ్వరును నెగ్గిపోవుట లేదు. వారాడినదేయాట పాడినదేపాట. త్యాగరా జాది పరమభాగవతుల చరిత్రములే యిందుకు తార్కాణములు.

సాధారణుడు లోకము నాకర్షింపలేడు. ఏవోనాలుగు పురాణగాథలను వల్లెవేసుకొని తిరుగు చున్న భాగవతారులను చూచుచున్నాము కదా! కుక్షింభరులగు వీరివలన లోకమున కావంతై నను మేలులేదు.

మహారాష్ట్రీయుగమునందు శివాజి మున్నగు మహారాజులు తుకారాం, రామదాసస్వామి మొదలగు పరమభాగవతుల సహాయము వల్లనే హిందూమతమును గాపాడిరి. ఇప్పటికిని ఆప్రాన్త ములయందు ప్రజలు భాగవతులను భగవంతునివలెనే భావించి షోడశోపచారములను జేయుచు న్నారు. అప్పటి దేశకాలపరిస్థితుల ననుసరించి యీ భాగవతోత్తములు లోకకళ్యాణ కాంక్షా పరులై సామాన్యజనులకు రాజకీయ సాంఘిక నైతిక విషయములను బోధించి వారిని దేశసేవకు లనుగా జేయుచుండెడివారు. హరికథ యొక మోహనాస్త్రము వంటిది. దీని మూలమున లోక మున కెంతయైన మేలుచేయవచ్చు.

ప్రకృతమునందీ శ్రీమతి సరస్వతీబాయిగారు భాగవతధర్మ ప్రచారము జేయు చుండుటను గూర్చి ముచ్చటింతము. „ కీర్తిశ్శ్రీర్వాక్చనారీణాం స్మృతిర్మేధా ధృతిఃక్షమా” యనునివి యీశ్వర విభూతులలోనివి. ఇవి యీయమయందుట మనము కన్నులార జూచు చున్నాము. అమరత్వము నొందియున్న శ్రీమతి డాక్టర్ అనిబెసెంటమ్మగారి తరువాత చెప్పబడ దగిన స్త్రీవ్యక్తి యీ మన శ్రీమతియే యని నా యూహ. ఐనను పరప్రత్యయనేయ బుద్ధులగు కొందరికి వెరచి నేనీ సౌభాగ్యవతిని డాక్టర్ సరస్వతీబాయి యని పేర్కొన లేకున్నాను. అదియటు లుండగా నీస్త్రీవ్యక్తి యిట్లొక మహాశక్తి యుక్తయగుటకు కారకులైన శ్రీయుత కృష్ణాచార్యుల వారి యుదార సాహసముల నిందు బ్రశంసింప కుండుటకు వీలులేదు. „ ఆచార్యవాన్ పురుషో వేద” అని శృతివచనము. మరియు „ మణినా వలయం వలయేన మణిః” అను న్యాయానుసార

మున నీ యాచార్యులవారును ఈ శిష్యురాలును లోకోత్తర కీర్తినొందుచున్నారు. ఇట్టి సందర్భములయందొక దైవరహస్యమున్నది, ఆచార్యుడు గొప్పవాడే యగును గాక శిష్యునకు జన్మాంతర వాసన లేకున్న శాస్త్రము లబ్బదు. అబ్బినను రాణించదు. ఈమె జీవితమును సంక్షేపముగ నొకప్పుడు గృహలక్ష్మి సంచికలలో వ్రాసియుంటిని. సమగ్రముగ వ్రాసి యాంధ్రదేశమునగల యిల్లాండ్రకు సమర్పింపవలయునను సంకల్పము మాత్రము నన్ను విడవలేదు. ఏ దేశమునందుగాని ఏ కాలమునందుగాని యిట్టి వారి చరితములు స్త్రీలకు మార్గదర్శకములనుట సునిశ్చయము.

సరస్వతీ బాయమ్మగారు భరతవర్షములోనున్న మహానగరముల నన్నింటిని దర్శించి యాయాస్థలములలో మహాసభలలో హరికథల గావించి లోకమాన్యులగు తిలకు మహాశయుల వంటి విద్వాంసులచే „గాయనపటు" „కీర్తనపటు" మొదలగు బిరుదములను సంపాదించియున్నను ఆమె కన్నులు మాత్రము పుట్టినచోటనే యున్నవి. ఇది యొక గొప్ప వింతయే కదా !! „సంసారస్త్రీ యిట్లు పదిమంది మగవారిలో నిలువబడి మాటాడుట సిగ్గుమాలినపని" యని బహిరంగముగ నిందించిన నాడైన ఆమె నిరుత్సాహపడి తనయుద్యోగము మానలేదు. „తుల్యనిందాస్తుతిర్మౌనీ" ఈమెచిత్త వ్యవస్థను దెలుపుట కింతకంటె నేమికావలయును. విద్యావ్యసన మీమెకు మేనితో బుట్టినది. ఇంటియొద్ద నీమె యూరక గూరుచుండదు. ఎవ్వరో విద్వాంసులు వచ్చుచునే యుందురు. ఏదియో యొక విశేషము జరుగుచునేయుండును, „సర్వత్ర సామగ్ర్యవిధాగుణానాం పరాఙ్ముఖీ విశ్వసృజః ప్రవృత్తిః" అనుట మనకు దెలిసియున్నను ఈ శ్రీమతి కాలక్షేపము విను నప్పుడు మాత్రము ఆపైయర్థమునందు సందేహము కలుగును.

సోదరసోదరీమణులారా, భరతమాత యిట్టి తనూజల గని శాశ్వతయశోవిరాజిత యగుట నెరుగక మిస్ మేయోయను పాశ్చాత్య యువతి యొకతె భారతస్త్రీల విషయమున నోటికివచ్చినట్లు వాగినది. యథార్థముగ భారతనారీమణుల ప్రతిభావిశేషములను పాశ్చాత్యదేశముల వారికి ఋజువు సేయవలయునన్న సంకల్పమే మహానుభావునకైన గలిగినచో ఈ శ్రీమతిని దత్ప్రాంతముల కంపుటయో లేక యీమె చేయుచున్న కాలక్షేపములను కొన్నింటిని ఫిల్ముల కెక్కించి యా దేశములలో ప్రదర్శించుటయో కావింపవలెను. మనవారిని మన మిట్లు పొగడుకొనుచున్నామను నింద మనకేల!! ప్రత్యక్షముగ వారీమెనుజూచి విని యానందింపవచ్చును, ఈమెనెరింగి యున్నంతవరకు భరతవర్షమున గలవయో విజ్ఞానవృద్ధులందరు „భవతి, చిరంజీవినీ యని మనసార జేసిన యాశీర్వాదము లరణ్యరోదనములగునా ? కావు, కావు ముమ్మాటికిని గావు! కాబట్టి నా కోరికె వట్టి గొంతెమ్మకోరికె గాకయుండున ట్లనుగ్రహించి, యా సర్వశక్తుడగు పరమేశ్వరుడే మహారాజు మనసునందైన జొచ్చి యీ పనిచేయించు గాక !

Srimati Saraswati Bai's Bhakti-Rasa

BY

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ADVOCATE.

ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாயின் பக்திரஸம்

கலைத்துறையில் உயர்ந்ததெனத் தென்படும் எதையும் பிறநாட்டினதாயினும் கவலை அன்னியில் எடுத்துக்கொண்டு தங்களுடையதாகவே செய்து கொள்வதில், தமிழர்களின் ஊக்கம் இவ்வளவு அவ்வளவென்பது சொல்வதற்கில்லை. ஏனென்றால், கலை உணர்ச்சியின் மேன்மையால் சுயபாஷாபிமானத்தைக்கூட புறக்கணித்தவர்வள் அல்லவா தமிழர்கள்? ஆம், கர்நாடக ஸங்கீதத்தின் எல்லையை எட்டிய தியாகராஜ ஸ்வாமிகள் இயற்றிய தெலுங்குக் கீர்த்தனைகளை தமிழர்கள் போற்றுவதுபோல் ஆந்திரர்கள்கூட போற்றாதது தெரிந்ததுதானே. சொந்த பாஷையில் ஆர்வம் கொண்டவர்கள்கூட கலை மோஹத்தினால் இதர பாஷையை துவேஷிக்காமல், தெலுங்குப் பாட்டுக்களை அனுபவிப்பதை நாம் தினமும் காண்கின்றோம். அம்மாதிரியேதான் ஹரிகதை காலக்ஷேபத்தின் முறையை ஒரு காலத்தில் மகாராஷ்டிரர்களிடமிருந்து தமிழர்கள் அங்கீகரித்ததாகச் சொல்வதுண்டு. அங்கீகரித்தது மாத்திரமல்ல; அம்மாதிரிக் கதை செய்யும் பந்தாவை மேன்மைபடுத்தி இருக்கிறவர்கள் தமிழர்களே என்பதில் ஐயமில்லை.

ஹரிகதை என்னும் பெயரிலிருந்தே கடவுளைப் பற்றிய புண்ணிய சரித்திரமென்று புலப்படும். கணக்கில்லாத புராணங்களையும், விசித்திர விசித்திரமான பகவத் லீலைகளையும், புஸ்தக மூலமாகவும் காதின் வழியாகவும் அறிந்து அனுபவித்து வந்த நம் நாட்டில், கதைகளுக்குப் பஞ்சமுண்டோ? சொல்நயமும், அரிய மனோதர்மமும் உள்ளவர்கள் கதை சொல்லத் தொடங்கினால், கேட்பவர்களுக்குச் சலிப்பேது? அதிலும் இடையிடையே கதைக்கென்றே இயற்றிய வர்ணமெட்டுக்களையும், உப கதைகளையும், சிறந்த அபிப்பிராயங்களடங்கிய சுலோகங்களையும், வாக்கியங்களையும் பதித்து, மற்றும் நடிப்பினாலும் ஸங்கீதத்தினாலும் நிரம்பிய ஹரிகதை நம் மனதைக் கவருவதுபோல் வேறெதுவும் கவராது. ஐந்து வயதுக் குழந்தைகள் முதல் தொண்ணூறு வயதுக்கிழவர்கள் வரையிலும், ஐந்துமணி நேரமானாலும், இரவென்றுகூடக் கவனியாமல் கதையைத் தவிர வேறு எதைக் கேட்க முடியும்?. அவ்விதம் கேட்பவர்களில் நாஸ்திகர்கள்கூட இருப்பதுண்டு. ஈச்வரனை நம்பாதவர்களும், நாம் கண்டிராத செயல்களை ஈச்வரனுடையதாக ஒப்புக்கொள்ள மனமில்லாதவர்களும்கூட கதை சுவாரஸ்யத்தாலும், பாகவதரின் பேச்சின் திறமையினாலும், கேவலம் ஸங்கீதத்தை மாத்திரம் அனுபவிப்பதைவிட அதிகமாக ஹரிகதையை ரஸிப்பதை நாம் பார்க்கின்றோம். அவ்வளவிற்கும் காரணம் கவனித்தால், ஹரிகதை செய்யப்படும் உயர்ந்த முறைதான். நாடகமேடையில் பாத்திரங்கள் அனேகர் சேர்ந்து நடிப்பதினால் ஏற்படும் கலை உணர்ச்சியை, ஒருவராய் நின்று நடத்தும் பாகவதரின் காலக்ஷேபத்தில் முற்றும் அனுபவிக்கின்றோம். அது சாமானியமான வித்தையல்ல. ஸங்கீதம், ஸாஹித்தியம், அழகிய பேச்சு, நடிப்பு, எல்லாம் பொருந்திய ஒருவ

ரிடம்தான் அம்மாதிரிக் கலை உணர்ச்சியை நாமும் அடைகின்றோம். சிற்பம், நாட்டியம், ஓவியம், ஸங்கீதம், ஸாஹித்தியம் எல்லாம் தெய்வத்தை நம் கண் முன் நிறுத்தும்—என்ற அரிய பெரிய கலைத் தத்துவத்தை இத்தேசத்தில் ஒன்றில்தான் பார்க்கமுடியும். அப்படியிருக்க தெய்வபக்தியை முக்கிய நோக்கமாகக் கொண்ட ஹரிகதை காலக்ஷேபத்தில் நம்மனதிற்கு ஏற்படக்கூடிய சாந்தி கொஞ்சமல்ல. நம் உள்ளத்தில் எழும் புனித உணர்ச்சி, செப்பையும் தங்கமாகச் செய்துவிடக்கூடும். ஆகையால்தான் மனிதனுடைய சிற்றறிவைத் தள்ளி இறைவன் பால் ஆசையைத் தூண்டும் ஸத்காலக்ஷேபமாக ஹரிகதைக்கு நம்முன்னோர்கள் பெயரிட்டிருக்கிறார்கள்.

இந்நாட்டில் இக்கலையின் உயர்விற்கு முக்கிய காரணம் அதைக் கையாண்டவர்களின் பெருமையே. பாகவத பரம்பரையில் பெயர் பெற்றவர்கள் பலருண்டு. தஞ்சாவூர் கிருஷ்ண பாகவதரைப் பற்றி புகழாத தென்னிந்தியர்கள் கிடையாதென்றே சொல்லலாம். அம்மாதிரியே பஞ்சாபகேச சாஸ்திரிகளின் படிப்பையும், பேச்சையும் மெச்சுவார் பலர்.

இப்போது முப்பது வருஷ காலமாக உழைத்து ஹரிகதை காலக்ஷேபங்களுக்கு உயிர் அளித்து வரும் பெண்மணியான ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாயையும் நம் தமிழ்நாடு பெற்றிருப்பதில் நமக்குப் பெருமையே. அவர்களுக்கு முன்னும் பின்னும்கூட அவ்வித உயர்தர கலை ஞானத்துடன் தோன்றியவரும், தோன்றக்கூடியவருமான பெண்மணிகள் இல்லையென்றே சொல்ல வேண்டும். பெண்கள் பாடலாம்; ஆனால் கதை செய்வது அவர்களுக்குச் சரியல்ல, என்று எண்ணியவர்கள் ஒரு காலத்தில் பலருண்டு. ஸர்வஜனங்களுக்கும் சொந்தமான தெய்வத்தை சிலர் மாத்திரம் நம்முடன் சேர்ந்து கோவிலில் கும்பிடக்கூடாதென்ற கருத்தை ஒத்ததே இவ்விதமான அபிப்பிராயமும். ஆனால் எல்லாவற்றிற்கும் பிராயச்சித்தம் ஏற்படுவதுபோல், ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் கதை செய்ய ஆரம்பித்தது முதல், கலை அபிமானிகளும், பக்திமான்களும் அப்பெரும் அவதூறை போக்க முன் வந்தார்கள். கொஞ்ச காலத்திற்குள் அதிகமாகவே அவர்களின் அரியகான ரஸத்தைப் பருகவும், அவர்களுடைய கதையின் பக்தி வெள்ளத்தில் முழுகவும் முன் வந்தார்கள் என்று சொல்வது மிகையாகாது.

ஸங்கீதத் துறையிலேயே சதா பயின்றுவரும் பெரிய வித்வான்களின் மத்தியிலும் கூட ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாயின் பாவம் ததும்பும் ஸங்கீதம் பரிமளிக்கத் தொடங்கியது. அவர்களின் குரலில் ஓங்காரம் பேசும். புல்லாங்குழலிலிருந்து கிளம்பும் ஒலியில் ஓங்காரம் உண்டென்றால், அதற்குச் சற்று ஸமீபத்தில் வரக்கூடியது இவர்களின் குரல். காத்திரமும், காம்பீர்யமும் கொண்டதினால்தான் பெருங்கூட்டங்களுக்கு அப்பாலும் செவிக்கு இன்பம் அளிக்கின்றது. அவர்கள் உச்சஸ்தாயியில் பாடுவது மாத்திரமல்ல; பேசுவதுங்கூட சுருதியை எவ்வித ஸ்தாயி பேதங்களிலும் சற்றும் நழுவவிடாது கிளம்பும் சாரீரம் அவர்களுடையதுதான். குறைந்தது நான்குமணி நேரம் மேடையின்மேல் நின்று பாடியும் பேசியும் அவர்கள் செய்யும் காலக்ஷேபத்தை சாமான்ய ஜனங்கள் மாத்திரமல்ல, அவ்வித கலைஉழைப்புள்ளவர்கள் கூடக் கண்டு வியக்கவேண்டியதுதான்.

நம் புராணங்களில் உள்ள கதைகள் போல் பக்தி பெருக்கையும், சமூக முன்னேற்றத்தையுமே கண்ணாக உடையவைகள் உலகில் வெகு சில இடங்களிலேதான் இருக்க முடியும். சமய உணர்ச்சி உடையவர்களுக்கு ஹரிகதை கேட்கும்பொழுது ஆனந்தம் பொங்கி வழிவது ஆச்சரியமில்லை.

ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் கதை செய்யும்பொழுது தன்னையே மறந்து, நடிப்பின் திறமையால் நம்மையும் மறக்க அடிப்பதை சகஜமாய் அவர்கள் கதையைக் கேட்டவர்கள் உணர்வார்கள். ராமதாஸர் சிறையில் தவித்து, நிந்தையாக ராமனைக் கூப்பிட்டு தான் செய்த திருப்பணிகளை பிலகரி ராகத்தில் விவரிக்குங்கால் "ஹே ராமச்சந்திரா! உன்னைக் குறித்து தம்புராவின் சுருதியுடன் ஸுஸ்வரமாக நான் புகழ்ந்து பாடினதற்கே எவ்வளவு வராகன்-நீ எனக்குத் தரவேண்டும்!" என்று அவர்கள் பாவபூர்ணமாகவும், சுருதி மதுரமாகவும் "ஜெயராம், ஜெயராம்" என்று இரண்டு தடவை சுருதியுடன் இனிய குரலைச் சேர்த்து இழுக்கும்போது, இவர்களுக்குக் கொடுக்க ஐச்வர்யம் நம்மிடம் இல்லையென்று தான் ஸங்கீத அபிமானிகள் எண்ணுவார்கள். த்ரௌபதிமானஸம்ரக்ஷணத்தில் பூமிதேவி பகவானிடம் சென்று உலகத்தில் துஷ்டர்கள் அதிகரிப்பதைக் குறித்து முறையிடும்பொழுது, பூமிதேவியின் பின் இருகைகளாலும் பூமிபாரத்தை சுமக்கும் காக்ஷியை நம் கண் முன் சிறந்த நடிப்பினால் விவரித்துக் காட்டும் அவர்களுடைய சக்தியை என்னவென்று சொல்வது!

இம்மாதிரி ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாயின் ஒவ்வொரு கதையிலும் அவர்களுடைய விசேஷ முறையின் அழகை எடுத்துச் சொல்வதென்றால் இச்சிறு கட்டுரை போதாது. ஆனால் அவர்கள் செய்யும் நந்தனார் சரித்திரம் என்னவோ நம் மனதை விட்டு ஒருக்காலும் அகலாது. கலை அபிமானிகள் காரணங்கள் பல சொல்லலாம். அதாவது, ஒரு சிலர் இக்கதையின் போக்கில் ஸ்ரீ கிருஷ்ணபாகவதரையே அவர்கள் பின்பற்றியதால்தான் அது அவ்வளவு சிரேஷ்டம் என்கிறார்கள். சிலர் இல்லை; நந்தன் சரித்திரம் முழுவதும் நம் தாய் மொழியில் ஏற்பட்டது; அதிலும் அதை சிருஷ்டித்த பெரியார் ஸ்ரீ கோபாலகிருஷ்ண பாரதி; அதுவேதான் கதையின் உயர்விற்குக் காரணம் என்பார்கள். வேறு சிலர் இப்போது நம் நாட்டில் உண்டாயிருக்கும் சமூக வாழ்க்கையின் குறைகளைச் சீர்படுத்தும்விதம் அது தோன்றுவதால்தான் அவ்விதம் நம்மனதை அக்கதை கவருகிறதென்பார்கள். எக்காரணமானாலென்ன? நந்தன்போன்ற பக்தர்களை இக்காலத்தில் நாம் பார்க்க முடியுமோ என்னவோ? ஆனால் இரண்டு மூன்று மணி நேரமாவது நம்மனக் கண்முன் நந்தனை பார்க்கும் பாக்கியத்தை ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் நமக்கு அளிக்கின்றார்கள். ஸ்வப்னத்தில் தோன்றிய ஈச்வரனுடைய தூண்டுதலின்பேரில், நந்தனுடைய தூய்மையான பக்தியை அறிந்த தீக்ஷதர்கள் அவனை அணுகுங்கால் "கிட்டநெருங்கிவர வேண்டாம் ஸ்வாமிகாள்!" என்று பூரிகல்யாணியில் ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் பாடும்பொழுது, அவர்கள் குரலில் ஏற்படும் கம்மலும், தைன்யமும், ஆயாசமும் நந்தன் அடைந்திருக்கக்கூடிய சிரமங்களையே நமக்கு எடுத்துக் காட்டுவதுபோலிருக்கும். அவ்விடத்தில் நிஜமான பாவம் இருப்பதால் நம்மனம் நந்தனைத்தான் நாடும். அவனுடைய எளிமையும், பக்திப் பெருமையும், படிப்பில் கர்வம்கொண்டவர்களை ஏசிக் காட்டுவதுபோல்கூட நமக்குத் தோன்றும்.

சாதாரணமாய் கதை செய்கிறவர்கள் பேச்சின் பிரவாகத்தில் கதையின் முக்கிய நோக்கத்தை மறப்பதை நாம் அறிவோம். ஆனால் ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் ஒருவரே ஹரி கதையின் உயிர் நிலையான பக்திரஸத்தை வேறு எந்த ஞாபகத்தாலும் மறப்பதில்லை.

மற்றொரு பெரிய விஷயத்தை ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாயிடம்தான் காணலாம். ஹிந்துஸ்தானி ராகங்களையும், பிருகாக்களையும், அவருடைய சாரீரஸம்பத்து ஒன்றுதான் இவ்வளவு காலமாக இழக்காமல் பாதுகாக்கின்றது. புரந்தரதாஸர் கீர்த்தனைகளையும், மற்றும் தேவர் நாமம் முதலியவைகளையும் அவரிடம் கேட்டவர்கள் வேறு எவரிடமும் கேட்க ஆசைப்படுவதுகூட அரிதுதான்.

Srimati Saraswati Bai As a Story Teller

By Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswamy Sastri

"Men are but children of a larger growth." Children love stories above all things. So do men and women. But though it is easy to hear a story, it is difficult to tell one well. To tell a good story in an attractive way, a combination of mental excellences is required. In western literature the ballad and the narrative poem and the epic and the drama, in poetry, and the romance and the novel and the short story, in prose, have achieved signal triumphs. The ballad, unlike the lyric, is impersonal and has the imprint of universality. It is the artistic moulding into a cosmos of a chaos of amorphous but natural popular compositions. It is the democracy of poetry. The narrative poem is a little more aristocratic and the element of self-conscious art is stronger in it than in the ballad. But it is in the epic that we have not only a fusion of art and naturalness but a lifting of both into a loftier sphere enshrining a heroic age. The crude ore of epic material becomes a splendid jewel in the hands of the jeweller of genius—the supreme epic poet who is capable of painting supermen and superwomen on a vast canvas and who has the gift of a superb splendour of style. The epic poet deals with real and not with invented material. But he lifts a bare chronicle into an epic heaven by largeness of utterance and by a combination of human and superhuman machinery. The epic poem is an apotheosis of great, human qualities. The drama is the product of a sophisticated age and exhibits the clash of human character and temperament in a variety which grows with the growth of civilisation.

Coming to the less glittering realm of prose, the romance and the novel and the short story have brought the art of story-telling from the cloud-land of poetry to crowded throughfares of life. Each has got its own distinctiveness.

The romance is a prose epic. It slowly gave way to the novel which sought to portray the crowded and ever shifting jostlings of life. But in our overworked and leisureless twentieth century, the short story is the most popular literary form in prose. It tells a single episode or a combination of a major episode and a minor episode with a selective imagination. It combines telling dialogue and character delineation with natural description and interpretation of life.

India is now experimenting in these western forms of art in prose. She had already attained signal excellence in the abovesaid art-forms in poetry. India has always been the home of the world's romance and the story teller of the world. Her *Panchatantra* travelled all over the world as the Fables of Bilpay. Her *Itihasas* have been the wonder of mankind and her *Puranas* come only behind them. But her greatest claim to the world's homage is in the invention of the *Harikatha* which is a synthesis and a fusion of the above said art-forms in poetry and prose into a new creative art by the transfusion of music. The Harikatha is the *Visva-rupa* of the storytelling art. It can exhibit all the gamut of human emotion; it can span the heights of heroism and the depths of pathos; it can be amorously playful and ascetically frigid; it can laugh like a child and frown like a Judge; and its world of art is as vast and varied as the real world and yet much more beautiful. It is full of the coloured fountains of music and shines like the fairyland created by the divine dance of the Kaveri at Krishnarajasagara lit up by cunning-concealed and multitinted electric lights. It has got a popular appeal to the peasant at the plough and the weaver at the loom; and yet it can charm the king on the throne and the Pandit amidst his books and the ascetic in his penance. Nay, it can charm the Gods as well. It is said that a more spacious story of Rama is beloved in heaven. But the secret of the never-failing enchantment of the Harikatha is in its combination of speech and song, and when the dance also is added to it in appropriate places (and not indiscriminately as was often done by some exponents, because inappropriate dance is but a bit of clownishness and buffoonery) there is the emergence of a supreme and superb art which is at once a feast of reason and a flow of soul.

What are the essential elements of good story-telling? First and foremost is the union of imaginative vision and concrete presentation. This is a rare combination indeed. To make the canvas alive with dead persons is difficult enough. To bestow on them life-like tints and to make them breath and bring the light of life into their eyes is a miracle. To make the inner workings of their minds as clear as daylight is more than a miracle—is, in short, a special

act of creation. To add to it all colourful, picturesque, telling, vivid, direct and concrete presentation and to make them speak and gesticulate as they would have done in life and to show the very passion and pathos of their tones—what shall I *say* ?

In the Western literature, Homer in the realm of epic poetry, Shakespeare in the realm of drama, Scott in the realm of fiction, and Macaulay and Carlyle in the realm of history had this magician's gift. But what are their achievements compared to those of Valmiki and Vyasa along with those of Kalidasa coming behind them? We have little to show in the realms of fiction and of history. But Valmiki and Vyasa are our trump cards.

चिरनिर्वृत्तमप्येतत्प्रत्यक्षमिव दर्शितं ।
लोके सज्जनषट्पदैरहरहः पेपीयमानं मुदा
जीयाद्भारतपंकजं कलिमलप्रध्वंसि नःश्रेयसे ॥

The Ramayana and the Mahabharata are the Himalaya of story telling—the sublime and skykissing heights from which have flowed the later streams of story that have fertilised the minds and hearts of countless generations in India and elsewhere.

The second great element in the Harikatha Art is the power of suggesting the moral and expounding the philosophy and religion of the story. As the Harikatha artist has to speak down to the illiterate and speak up to the genius in literature and art and philosophy and religion and even to the saint who is in ceaseless communion with God, he has to be clear aud profound at the same time. It must be said of him as was said of the river Thames by the Western poet—that he is—

"Though deep yet clear, gentle yet not dull,
Strong without rage, without overflowing full."

He has then to combine depth and clearness, gentleness and liveliness, strength and tranquillity, fulness and restraint. He has to charge his story with the electricity of a fervid faith and a deep philosophy of life. He has therefore to be an artist and a sage and a saint as well. This means that he must master the Vedas, the Vedangas, the Darsanas, the Dharma Sastras, the Puranas, the Tantras, the Agamas, the Kavyas, the Natakas, and the Niti Sastras. This is of course an impossible feat. He has hence to gather the essence of them all, as

transmitted from master to disciple. He will have among his audience pandit and peasant, men and women, old and young, all types and temperaments. He will find the thirst for God in all of them. But they would have different kinds and degrees of receptiveness and response. He must therefore be learned and simple, profound and clear, rational and emotional, mystic and modern by turns.

This is not all. He must be a master of ancient and modern literature in all the Indian languages and especially in the Sanskrit language. It will be a superhuman feat to be a master of all of them. But here again he must gather the cream of them from his predecessors and by his own assiduous study. He must be always flitting like a bee in the garden of literature and gathering and storing the honey secreted therein. His must therefore lead a strenuous life of continuous acquistion of precious thoughts.

Even this is not enough. He must practice what he preaches. He must

"Not as some ungracious pastors do,
Show us the steep and thorny way to heaven;
Whilst like a puff'd and reckless libertine
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own lead."

He lives in the full glare of publicity and a Harikatha artist whose acts belie his words will soon find his occupation gone. He must be a man of God and live a pure and yet happy life. He must walk day after day in love of man and fear of God. Otherwise his talents will dim and his glory will set. Of him will be said, in Sri Krishna's words.

येत्वेतदभ्यसूयन्तो नानुतिष्ठन्ति मे मतं ।
सर्वज्ञानविमूढांस्तान्विद्धि नष्ठानचेतसः ॥

I have reserved to the last the final equipmeut which is the soul of the Harikatha art. He must be an expert musician and yet he must curb himself and his art and not wander off into swaram and Pallavi legerdemain. He must also be lucky enongh to have equally able junior musicians (பக்கப்பாட்டு) who will fill up his pauses with a genius of their own and whose voices will chime with his and give an added richness and flavour and perfume to the swelling tide of song. Generally his juniors are too junior and shy or too senior and strident and we do not find a perfect chime and blend of voices. He has to be a master of songs in many Indian languages. His singing has to be soulful and not merely technically accurate.

This is why we find so few Harikatha masters. The equipment needed is so diverse and so difficult. In my experience I have found that even the best of them have not studied well the gems of devotional poetry in which Tamil excels Tiruvoimozhe, Thevaram, Tiruvachakam, Tiruppugazh and Tiruvarutpa. Most of them have but a slight knowledge of Sanskrit and even their Sanskrit pronunciation makes us fume with silent and repressed fury.

Into such a difficult field Srimati Saraswati Bai entered thirty years ago. She blazed a trail and was promptly hailed and noted. No doubt a country which knew Gargi and Maitreyi need not have been so prudish at all. Kalidasa describes Urvasi as playing the part of Lakshmi in *Lakshmiswayamvara* but men took away from women even the privilege of impersonating women in dramas. The masculine attitude in the era when Saraswati Bai's star burst into view was that of the great Cham of Letters who regarded a talking woman as equivalent to a dog which could stand on two legs. The wonder was that it could stand at all.

Srimati Saraswati Bai's originality assisted not only in blazing a new trail but in being able to combine many essential elements in the Harikatha art. God has given her a voice which is sweet and yet strong, strong and yet sweet. She is a good musician especially excelling in Raga Alapana and Raga Bhava Pradarsana. She excels in those little trills and shakes and quivers of voice which are the soul of the soul of melody. Others may excel in the number of keertanas known to them or in swaram building or in musical legerdemain. But she knows many languages and can sing songs in them. Then, again, she knows Sanskrit well and her intonation and pronunciation are superb, though there have been others who have been far more learned than herself. It cannot be said that her knowledge covers the vast range of subjects mentioned above by me but she has, like a busy living bee, gathered the honey of many flowers in the vast and fragrant garden of learning. She has a deep and fervid faith in God and it has a charming and childlike *naivete* instead of having any overweighted learning or pompous parade. Perhaps the most noteworthy trait in her exposition is her grasp of the essentials of the story and her power of direct dramatic presentation. It cannot be said that she is a past mistress in the delineation of the sublime or in the difficult arts of pathos and humour but in these directions no other artist excelled her. To succeed in feeling the sublime and in kindling such a feeling is the work of supreme genius. Here again who has succeeded except Valmiki and Vyasa and Milton ? Humour seems to be a

masculine gift and even there we get but clownish antics or broad farce in most cases. . Most Indians—men and women—are sadly deficient in it. Pathos again, though it became incandescent as poesy in the *Ramayana*, is the most difficult thing to handle; for it easily degenerates into bathos. Saraswati Bai has the genius to dare and to succeed where few will dare at all. The most charming thing about her art as a story teller is her winsome combination of shy modesty and supreme self-confidence. She has the magician's wand in her hands and it looks as if it can be said of her art that "Age cannot wither it nor custom stale its infinite variety."

Harikatha Movement in Andhradesh

BY

J. SATYANARAYANA MOORTI, M.A., B.L.,

The East has always found an organic kinship between Religion and Philosophy, Music and Literature. The same stream of ideas flows through them. The best faculties imbedded in the human breast and the lofty ideals which lift humanity to divinity find expression through them. Our gods are represented as fine musicians and our seers as immortal singers. Sri Krishna, Saraswati, Nataraja and Narada,—our divine artists fill our minds in moments of deep contemplation with spiritual fervour and religious ecstasy.

Music and dance, poetry and drama have a conjoint expression in **Harikatha.** The devotees of Maharashtra were our foremost singers who received in moments of beatitude inspiration from Narada, the divine Bhagavatar and who became the originators of **Harikatha** in our country. The Andhras have adopted and developed it quite in consonance with their genius. Telugu, justly styled as the Italian of the East and intrinsically mellifluous, became a fit vehicle for **Harikatha** compositions.

But **Harikatha** could not claim the honour and distinction which **Asukavitha**, or extempore versification received in the Telugu land owing to some historical reasons. Royal patronage served Andhra Muse with ineffable devotion. Nannayya, Tikkanna and Peddanna owed their literary eminence to the generous encouragement and honour obtained from Rajanarendra, Manuma Siddhi and Krishnadevaraya. **Harikatha**, a later development could not gain the glory and prosperity to which **Purana** and **Prabandha** had won. Whereas

our poets were carried in palanquins or seated on gaily caparisoned horses or majestic elephants or deified with golden flowers, our **Bhagavtars** suffered from paucity of honour and poverty of recognition.

Modern Era saw the end of princely patronage and the beginning of popular favour. Stray instances of royal recognition made their appearance in the traditional track. No actor or **Bhagavatar** was invited for laurels by Andhra Princes. Public appreciation, which became the pay-master of our artists, conferred honour on our Bhagavathars and gave fillip to **Harikatha Movement** in **Andhradesh**.

Harikatha is addressed both to the masses and the classes. It appealed to popular sentiment. The glory of art lies in the recognition it gains not only in **Pandit Parishads** or great academics but also in popular assemblies. Indian populace is philosophic by temperament ; it is inspired by religious ideals. **Harikatha**, an exposition of these ideals, gained ready response all over the Telugu land. If it had been didactic, it would have scared away audiences having no patience for teaching or preaching. While giving great scope for the expression of ethical principles, metaphysical truths, wise saws and nice epigrams, it finds expression in dramatic narration of an epic story. The **Bhagavatar** plays many parts; he speaks and sings, acts and dances and maintaining **Navarasams** until the end of his performance.

The greatest leader of our Harikatha Movement is still happily with us. Adibhatla Narayana Das is a many-sided genius. Great in music, poetry and dance, he has dedicated his marvellous gifts to the development of **Harikatha**. Intellectual feats and linguistic jugglery which won applause in many audiences made no appeal to him. He has not consecrated his gifts to translations which became obsessions to many. Transcendent genius cannot be cribbed, cabined and confined within the purlieus of mere interpretation or sheer imitation. Narayana Das plies his pen and **Veena** with equal skill. He gives a rational touch to mythological tales. He does not take everything that rolls in the traditional track as gospel truth. He has some **Kavyams** to his credit but his genius played well in **Harikatha** compositions. Albeit the stories have been hewn from Epics, the ideology and phraseology, the composition and exposition are his own. Simile wedded to symphony and metaphor to melody fall, during the course of the performance, spontaneously from his lips. In contexts of intense emotion he invokes his favourite **Sambhu** and dances on the stage entrancing the heart of the audience. His scholarship

in Telugu and Sanskrit is phenomenal. He can compose a variety of songs and poems with remarkable ease and skill both in Sanskrit and Telugu. He shows various phases of beauty in style. He can write in pure and pristine Telugu as also in Telugu rendered resplendent by the wealth gleaned from Sanskrit phraseology. His **Harikatha** compositions are replete with Telugu verses, Sanskrit songs and prose passages of ineffable beauty and remarkable originality. He is well-versed in English. Narayanadas takes delight in interspersing his performances with the recitations of his verse-translations from Shakespeare's works. We find evidence of his acquaintance with Urdu in his performances.

Next to Narayanadas, Batajidas won distinction as a **Harikatha** composer and Bhagavatar. But **Harikatha** as a great musical and devotional movement greatly owed its inspiration to Narayanadas only. Admiring disciples ran to Vizianagaram and sat at his feet. Vajipayayazula Subbayya and Nethi Lakshminarayana have been the pet pupils of the great **Bhagavatar**. Subbayya is a faithful votary of Muse and a successful man in life. Lakshminarayana has attained considerable scholarship in Sanskrit and Telugu, He is gifted with a sweet tone. His intonation is clear and perfect. Being a good **Bhakta** he strikes the chord of devotion in the heart of his audience. A resident of Nutakki, he draws inspiration from the great deity at Mangalagiri which is in the vicinity. Subbayya's outstanding disciples are Pentapadu Subbayya of Ungutooru and Pucchala Bavarrazu of Rajahmundry. P. Subbayya closely followed the foot-steps of his master. As a teacher and musician he took delight in **Harikatha** and gained success and wealth as a **Bhagavatar**. Bavarrazu, an adept in histrionic art and one gifted with a clear ringing voice captures the heart of his audience with great confidence. His performances won applause not only from Andhras and Tamilians but also from Bengalees and Hindustanees in Calcutta fifteen years ago. Maddali Seshagiri Rao and Brahmiajosula Subbarao, Stage actors of great repute, pass for Bhagavatars on festive occasions.

Narayanadas, V. Subbayya, Lakshminarayana and P. Subbayya are generally engaged for **Sampoornaramayana** series. The series generally last for forty days. After the final **Mangalam** the audience is treated to a grand feast like the famous pilgrims of Centerbury Tales. The function, rendered remarkable by devotion and delight, establishes sweet social relationships in Andhradesh.

Pesaraganti Somayazulu of Ryali was a different type of Bhagavatar. Dancing he did not know. He was aged and orthodox, calm and dignified. He would pronounce his words with perfect clearness and surety. Sometimes he would dote on philology while dwelling on the psychology trickling therein. His

stress on incidents of emotion was great and effective. He would capture the heart, feel certain of the effect and proceed steadily, sometimes splitting up his favourite **Sankarabharnam** and pausing for moments in the **Arohana** process. Somayazulu never indulged in wit at the expense of gravity. He was averse to cheap stories often introduced by some **Bhagavatars** to provoke laughter in a dignified devotional story. Somayazulu's performances appealed mostly to Puritans. For a number of decades he was booked up for the **Harikatha** performances near Markendeya temple by the Orthodox Section of Rajahmundry population during Ramanavami festivals. Melody vies with the flood of Godavari during those days to render Rajahmundry unspeakably delightful.

Among ladies we find very few who have become adepts in Harikatha performance. Srimati Saraswati Bai is second to none in this field in our country. Honour conferred upon her is honour vouchsafed to art.

Art is receiving scant attention in these days of political heat and economic distress. Art in fact gives life and vigour to a nation. It feeds the soul and nurses noble qualities within human breast. Political regeneration which, in truth, constitutes our immediate desideratum, cannot feed souls hungering for spiritual food. So endeavours for political uplift must needs synchronise with genuine service to Art. Time spent for the fructification of aesthetic ideals is time spent for our march towards the kingdom of Heaven. The world can lift itself from the present quagmire if it lends its ear to the message of Art which contains the voice of soul. The genius of a nation or the soul power of a people cannot be bound with chains to the rock of intransigence. It asserts its liberty in spontaneous expression and artistic exposition. Ill fares the land where artists are committed to envy, malice, disrespect and starvation.

Dakshina Bharat has her Udaya Sankars and Menakas. Want of encouragement however kept them mute and inglorious.

It is a happy sign that the thought-leaders of Madras have realised the necessity of bringing out what is best in the breast of our nation.

Ephemeral emotion or spasmodic endeavour can do no good. Periodical sympathies or annual ceremonies do not lead us anywhere. Sustained effort buttressed by the power of organisatian or the strength of the public is the **Sinequanon** for singular success. May our leaders march onwards with ardour and alacrity, inflexible will and firm determination to win conquests for our arts. May the honour shown to Srimati Saraswati Bai lead us to auroral splendours of a New Era in the demesne of Music and Literature.

Harikatha Movement in Tamil Nad

BY

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தமிழ்நாட்டின் காலக்ஷேப இயக்கம்

प्रह्लादस्तालधारी तरलगतितयाचोद्धवः कांस्यधारी
वीणाधारी सुरर्षिः स्वरकुशलतयारागकर्ताऽर्जुनोऽभूत् ।
इन्द्रोऽवादीन्मृदङ्गं जयजयसुकराः कीर्तने ते कुमाराः
यत्राग्रे भाववक्ता सरसरचनया व्यासपुत्रो बभूव ॥

பாத்மபுராணத்தின் பாகவத மகாத்ம்யத்தில், ஸ்ரீசுகாசாரியர் செய்த கதையில், பிரஹ்லாதர் தாளம் தரித்தார்; உத்தவர் ஜாலர் போட்டார்; நாரதர் வீணை வாசித்தார்; அர்ஜுனன் கானஞ் செய்தார்; தேவேந்திரன் மத்தளம் அடித்தார்; ஸநத் குமாரர்கள் "ஜய ஜய" என்று கோஷித்தார்; ஸ்ரீ சுகாசாரியர் ஸரஸவாக்குடனும் பாவத்துடனும் ப்ரவசனஞ் செய்தார்;—என்றிருப்பதினால், கதாபத்ததி நந்தேசத்தில் தொன்று தொட்டு வழங்கி வருகிறது என்று விளக்காமலே விளங்கும்.

இந்த பத்ததி வடநாட்டில் தொடர்பாகவே இருந்திருக்க, தென்னாட்டில், இராமாயணம், பாரதம், பாகவதம் முதலியவைகளைப் புராண ரூபமாய்ப் பிரவசனஞ் செய்வது, கூட்டுங் கூட்டமாய்ச் சேர்ந்து பஜனை செய்வது, அதில் சில கீர்த்தனங்களைப்பாடி அர்த்தஞ் சொல்லுவது—முதலியவைகளே பிரசாரத்தில் இருந்து வந்தன.

தஞ்சாவூர் ஸமஸ்தானத்தை மஹாராஷ்டிர அரசர்கள் ஆளுவதற்கு ஆரம்பித்தபிறகு தான், தற்கால ரீதியுள்ள கதைக்கு ஆரம்பம். அக்காலத்தில்தான் மேரு ஸ்வாமிகள், மோர்கர் பாவா முதலியோர்கள் தஞ்சாவூரில் தங்கிக் கதை செய்தார்கள். அப்பொழுதுதான் திருவாங்கூரில் ஸ்ரீ ஸ்வாதி திருநாள் இருந்த காலம். அங்கே மேரு ஸ்வாமிகள் சென்று மஹாராஷ்டிர பத்ததியைப் பரவச் செய்தார். அதனால் மேற்படி ஸ்ரீ ஸ்வாதி திருநாளே சாகி, தண்டி, முதலிய தாட்டி உருப்படிகளை இயற்றினார்கள்.

இந்த மஹாராஷ்டிர சம்பிரதாயம் தமிழ்க்கதைகளுக்கு ஏற்பட்டது தஞ்சாவூர் ஸ்ரீ கிருஷ்ண பாகவதரின் காலம் முதல்தான். அவர் தன் 10 வயது முதல், மோர்கர் பாவாவின் கதையைக் கேட்டுக்கொண்டும், பிறகு அவரிடமே உபதேசம் பெற்றும், அவருடைய கதையில் பிடில், சுரபத் முதலிய வாத்யங்களை வாசித்துக் கொண்டும், விஷயங்களை நன்கறிந்தும், அவற்றையெல்லாம் தமிழில் மாற்றி, அதற்குத் தகுந்தவாறு, தமிழ், தெலுங்கு முதலிய

பாஷைகளிலுள்ள உருப்படிகளைச் சேர்த்து, ஸ்ரீ தியாகராஜரின் கிருதிகளையும் உபயோகித்து, அழகான பிரவசனஞ் செய்து, தக்க பக்க ஜமாக்களுடன் கதை செய்து வந்தார். ஜனங்களும் அதைக் கேட்டுப் பரவசமடைந்தார்கள். அவருக்குப் பக்க சகாயம், ஆரம்பத்தில் கருந்தட்டாங்குடி கோவிந்தபாகவதர்; பிறகு, மருதப்பா; பிறகு தஞ்சாவூர் பஞ்சாபகேச பாகவதர். ஸ்ரீ கிருஷ்ணபாகவதருக்கு, கர்நாடகம், ஹிந்துஸ்தானி இரண்டிலும் பாடும் திறமை, வாக்ஸ்பஷ்டம், முகவசீகரம், அபிநயம், கதா பாத்ரங்களின் ஜாத்யங்களை அப்படியே நடித்துக் காட்டல், நர்த்தனம், சுருதிலயசுத்தம், கம்பீர சாரீரம், இவையெல்லாங்கூடி, ஒரு பெருங் கியாதியை உண்டாக்கி, இவர் மாதிரி கதை செய்ய ஒருவராலும் முடியாது என்ற பெயரைப் பெற்றார்.

இக்கிருஷ்ண பாகவதருக்கு முன்பே, ஸ்ரீ நரஸிம்மபாகவதர் கதை செய்துகொண்டிருந்தார். இவர் ஸ்ரீ தியாகராஜருடைய உருப்படிகளைத் தாராளமாய் எடுத்துப் பாடினார்.

வேதசாஸ்திர புராணாதிகளில் பாரங்கதராயும், கீதாசாரியராயும் விளங்கின ஸ்ரீ லக்ஷ்மணாசாரியவர்களுடைய கதையில், ஸ்ரீ மஹாவைத்தினாதையரும், ஸ்ரீ பட்டணம் சுப்பிரமணி அய்யரும் ஒரு சமயம் பாடியிருக்கிறார்கள். ஸ்ரீ அனந்தராம பாகவதரோ, சில வருஷங்களாகவே அவ்வாசாரிய புருஷருக்குப் பக்கப்பாட்டே பாடியிருக்கிறார். இவ்வாசாரியருடைய கதையில் தனி விசேஷமென்ன வென்றால், வேதாந்த இதிஹாஸ புராண அர்த்தங்களை வாசாமகோசரமாய் வர்ஷிப்பார்; ஸர்வமத ரஹஸ்யங்களையும் நன்கெடுத்துக் காட்டுவார். இவர்களிடம் கதை கேட்டவர்கள் இவர்களைச் சுகாசாரியர் என்பார்கள்.

திருப்பயணம் ஸ்ரீ பஞ்சாபகேச சாஸ்திரியாருக்குக் கதைக்கு வேண்டிய ரூபம், ஸங்கீதம், ஸாஹித்யம், பேசுந்திறமை, எதிலுமே அலாதி ருசி உண்டு. தானே ஒரு நூதன வழியை ஏற்படுத்திக்கொண்டு, அத்துடன் இராமாயணக் கதைகளைத் தொடர்ச்சியாகச் செய்து, தக்கபக்க ஜமாக்களுடன் பரமருசியாகக் கதை செய்து வந்தார். கதாலோகத்தில் ஸ்ரீ பஞ்சாபகேச சாஸ்திரியார் ஒரு ப்ரமுகர் என்பதை யாரும் ஒப்புக்கொள்ளவே வேண்டும்.

ஸ்ரீ சிதம்பர பாகவதர், சைவ வைஷ்ணவ கதைகளை பல அபூர்வ அர்த்தங்களோடு நிரூபிப்பதுமன்றி, லௌகிகமுறையை அநுசரித்து, அன்றாடம் தினசரிப்பத்திரிகைகளில் பிரசுரித்துள்ள விஷயங்களை எடுத்து நன்கு விஸ்தரிப்பார். அவருடைய கதையிலே ஜனங்களுக்குப் பிரியம் உண்டு.

இன்னும், ஜீவந்தர்களாக ஸ்ரீ முத்தையா பாகவதர், ஸ்ரீ சீரங்காசாரியார், ஸ்ரீ சடகோபாசாரியார், ஸ்ரீ அண்ணாசாமி பாகவதர் முதலான பெரியோர்கள் இப்போதும் காலக்ஷேபத்துறையில் தொண்டு புரிந்துகொண்டிருக்கிறார்கள். அவர்களில் ஒவ்வொருவரையும் பற்றி எழுத ஒரு புஸ்தகம் வேண்டும்; அத்தகைய அரிய பாகவதர்கள் அவர்கள்.

ON SRIMATI SARASWATHI BAI

By

V. V. SRINIVASA AIYANGAR, B.A. B.L.

Advocate & Ex-High Court Judge, Madras.

Srimati Saraswati Bai has been the most distinguished Lady Bhagavathar of South India during some decades past. I said in South India to be certain of my statement. I am not at all sure whether she is not indeed the best Lady Bhagavatar in all India. At any rate, I have not heard of any one else of her capacity and attainments. It was about thirty years ago that she made her first appearance in public and was almost immediately hailed with admiration and high recognition. Those were spacious days when Kalakshepams of the kind she performs had not become unfashionable. Kalakshepams were then regarded in the light of being religious discourses. That a young girl should come forward and have the audacity to lecture on Bhakti and God and Salvation to large and learned audiences was astounding enough. That Srimati Saraswati Bai however should have overcome all such prejudice and all the envy and jealousy of male Bagavatars only goes to demonstrate that learning and art in her were not merely superficial but were calculated to stand the test of time and the rigour of criticism. The only fault, if fault it be, I can attribute to her was the inducement and the temptation that her unprecedented success, offered to many a girl in South India who could sing a few songs and be facile in the repetition of words conned by rote to become Lady Bhagavatars in their turn. At one time their name was legion. But I do not hear of any of them today. Perhaps many of them have abandoned the difficult art of Kalashepams to the attractions of being Cinema Stars. Whatever it may be, the mere fact that, almost from the day Srimati Saraswati Bai realised her vocation in life to this day, she has continued to be loyal and devoted to the great art and to be appreciated in the same manner and measure she is even today, is the most conclusive proof, if proof were wanted, of her great supremacy, as Lady Bhagavatar.

The first years of her appearance in the public were still at a time when there were great and famous exponents of that art among males and if in comparison to those highly learned and carefully trained Bhagavatars she did not come off badly, that itself should be regarded as creditable in highest degree.

I am glad to remember today that her genius and talents were discovered first by two very dear and highly respected friends of ours the late Mr and Mrs. Buchi Babu Naidu. Mr. Buchi Babu Naidu was a gentleman reminding one always of the characteristics of the old English aristocracy. Mrs. Buchi Babu was almost regarded as the Lakshmi of the Luz in Mylapore and she was well known for her natural kindness and generosity. It is to the early recognition and patronage of these two and later of Lady Sankara Nair that Srimati Saraswati Bai owes all her later popularity and success. I am glad therefore to be able today to refer publicly to those early patrons of Srimati Saraswati Bai.

Numerous have been my personal friends who were almost madly enthusiastic in their appreciation of her music and learning and art. I felt always charmed by some characteristics of her renderings for which I had nothing but admiration. Many things have been said and written in appreciation of her music learning, humour and other characteristic excellences. But I feel I should (apart from her music) place two special features of her performances above everything else namely, her being at home, as it were, in many languages unlike other Bhagavatars who could perform only in their chosen language and her clear pronunciation and enunciation in the rendering specially of Sanskrit verses. Of her, indeed I can state without fear of contradiction that nothing she uttered or spoke without thoroughly understanding and appreciating the meaning and significance herself. Hers has not been the parrot-like repetition so characteristic of most of the professionals in that art. I have no doubt she has earned by her merit and success a right to a much greater recognition than the mere putting up of a portrait of hers in the Jagannatha Bhakta Sabha. It is not however that I do not value the recognition and honour implied in it. In the absence of any better, the lesser is not the less welcome.

I cannot better conclude than by conveying the high appreciation of the public of this Presidency to her Guru Pandit Krishnacharya whose most valuable contribution to the public has been the making and moulding of Saraswati Bai.

Goddess Saraswati's Gifted Daughter

BY

SRI. R. KRISHNAMURTI

Associate Editor, Anandavikatan.

கலைமகளின் தவப்புதல்வி

[ரா. கி.]

"சித்திரமும் கைப்பழக்கம் செந்தமிழும் நாப் பழக்கம்" என்று சொல்வதுபோல், பயிற்சியினாலும் உழைப்பினாலும் அநேக கலைகளில் தேர்ச்சி அடையலாம். ஆனால், சங்கீதக் கலைமட்டும் இம்மாதிரி பயிற்சியினாலேயே வரக்கூடியதல்ல. சாரீர சம்பத்தும் சங்கீத ஞானமும் பூர்வ ஜன்ம பாக்கியத்தினால்தான் ஒருவருக்குக் கிடைக்கின்றன. சின்னஞ் சிறு குழந்தைகள் சிலர், சுருதிலயத்துடன் நெரடான கீர்த்தனங்களை ஆச்சரியமாகப் பாடுகிறார்கள்; அபூர்வ ராகங்களை எடுத்து அநாயாசமாக ஆலாபனம் செய்கிறார்கள். ஆனால் வேறு சிலருக்கோ, ஆயுள் பூராவும் சங்கீதம் கேட்டபிறகுகூட ராகங்களுக்குள் வித்தியாசம் கண்டுபிடிக்க முடிவதில்லை. வெகுநாள் அப்பியாசம் செய்த பிறகும் தாளம் பிடிபடாமல் தவிப்பவர்கள் உண்டு. ஆகையினால்தான், சங்கீதக் கலைக்கு மட்டும் பூர்வஜன்ம சுகிர்தம் வேண்டுமென்று சொல்லக்கூடியதா யிருக்கிறது.

அத்தகைய பூர்வ ஜன்ம சுகிர்தத்தைப் பரிபூரணமாகப் பெற்ற பாக்கிய சாலி ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அவர்கள். சுமார் இருபது வருஷங்களுக்கு முன்பு இந்த அம்மாளின் காலட்சேபம் கேட்பதற்காக நான் பத்துமைல் தூரம் கால் நடையாக நடந்து சென்றேன். அந்தக் காலத்தில் ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் கதை யென்றால், ஜனங்களுக்கு ஒரே ஆவேசந்தான். கூட்டம் சொல்லமுடியாது. எல்லோரும் வாயில் ஈ புகுந்தது தெரியாமல் கதையைக் கேட்டு ரஸித்துக்கொண்டிருந்தார்கள். எனக்கோ, கதையில்கூட அவ்வளவாக கவனம் செல்லவில்லை. நமது தேசத்தில்கூட இப்பேர்ப்பட்ட பெண்மணி ஒருவர் இருக்கமுடியுமா என்ற ஆச்சரியத்திலேயே முழுகியிருந்து விட்டேன். "என்ன வாக்குவன்மை! எத்தகைய பாஷாஞானம்! விஷயங்களை எவ்வளவு நாடகத் திறமையுடன் எடுத்துச் சொல்கிறார்! சங்கீத வர்ஷத்தைப் பற்றியோ சொல்லவே வேண்டாம். அவருடைய மதுர கண்டத்திலிருந்து எப்படிப்பட்ட ரவைகள் பொழிகின்றன! இந்த அம்மாளுக்கு 'ஸரஸ்வதிபாய்' என்று பெயர் எவ்வளவு பொருத்தமா யமைந்திருக்கிறது!" என்றெல்லாம் எண்ணி யெண்ணி வியந்துகொண்டிருந்தேன்.

அந்த நாளில் பாரதியாரின் பாடல்களை நான் புதிதாகப் படித்துக்கொண்டிருந்தேன். அவற்றில், புதுமைப் பெண் என்னும் தலைப்பில் உள்ள பின்வரும் பாட்டு என் மனதைப் பெரிதும் கவர்ந்திருந்தது:—

"சாத்திரங்கள் பல பல கற்பராம்
சௌரியங்கள் பல பல செய்வராம்
மூத்த பொய்மைகள் யாவும் ஒழிப்பராம்
மூடக்கட்டுகள் யாவும் தகர்ப்பராம்

காத்து மானிடர் செய்கையனைத்தையும்
கடவுளர்க் கினிதாகச் சமைப்பராம்
ஏத்தி ஆண்மக்கள் போற்றிட வாழ்வராம்
பெண்மைத் தெய்வத்தின் பேச்சுக்கள் கேட்டீரோ ?"

ஒருவேளை ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாயின் காலட்சேபத்தைக் கேட்டுவிட்டுத்தான் கவி பாரதியார் மேற்கண்டவாறு பாடினாரோ என்றும் தோன்றுகிறது. ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாயின் அபார கலைத் திறமைகூட எனக்கு அவ்வளவு ஆச்சரியமளிக்கவில்லை. அத்தனை பெரிய சபையில் அவர் தைரியமாக எழுந்து நின்று, தயக்கமில்லாமலும் தங்கு தடை யில்லாமலும் கடல் மடை திறந்ததுபோல் பேசியதும் பாடியதுமே அதிக ஆச்சரியத்தை அளித்தது.

"பாகவதர்கள் எத்தனையோ உபாக்கியானங்களைக் காலட்சேபம் செய்கிறார்களே ? ஒரு வேளை வருங்காலத்தில் இந்த ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அம்மாளின் கதையையே யாராவது காலட்சேபமாகச் செய்வார்களோ ?" என்றும் நான் எண்ணியதுண்டு. இது வெறும் மிகைப் புகழ்ச்சி என்பதாக வாசகர்களுக்குத் தோன்றலாம். நான் சிறு பிள்ளையாயிருந்த காலத்தில் என் மனதில் தோன்றியதை உள்ளபடி சொல்கிறேனே தவிர வேறில்லை. அதை வெளிப் படையாகச் சொல்வதில் எனக்குத் தயக்கமும் ஏற்படவில்லை. மலைக்கோட்டை கோவிந்தசாமிப் பிள்ளை, திருப்பயணம் பஞ்சாபகேச பாகவதர், டபிள்யூ. துரைசாமி அய்யங்கார் போன்ற மகாவித்வான்களும் ரஸிகர்களும் அந்த அம்மாளின் காலட்சேபத்தை மதி மயங்கிக் கேட்டுக்கொண்டிருந்தார்களென்றால், பள்ளிக்கூடத்துச் சிறுவனாகிய எனக்கு அத்தகைய வியப்பு ஏற்பட்டதில் ஆச்சரியமென்ன ?

இதெல்லாம் பழைய கதை. இந்தக் காலத்தில் பல காரணங்களினால் காலட்சேபம் என்னும் அரிய கலைக்கு அவ்வளவு ஆதரவில்லாமல் போய்விட்டது. ஆனாலும், ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாயின் புகழ்மட்டும் அன்றுபோலவே இன்றும் குன்றாமல் இருக்கிறது. நாளுக்கு நாள் அவர்மேல் எனக்கிருந்த மரியாதையும் வளர்ந்து வந்திருக்கிறது. தமிழ்நாட்டின் சிறந்த வித்வான்களில் மற்ற யாருக்கும் இல்லாத பெருமை யொன்றும் ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அம்மாளுக்கு உண்டு. இந்த நாளில், வடநாட்டுக் கலைஞர்களையும் சங்கீதக்காரர்களையும் தென்னாட்டவர் போற்றுவது சகஜமாயிருக்கிறதே தவிர, தென்னாட்டிலிருந்து ஒருவித்வான் வட இந்தியாவுக்குச்சென்று வடநாட்டாரால் போற்றப்பட்டாரென்பது சாதாரணமாய்க் கிடையாது. அந்தப் பெருமையை அடைந்தவர் சிறப்பாக ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அம்மாள்தான். அவர் வட இந்தியாவில் பல இடங்களுக்கும் சென்று, வித்வத் சபைகளில் பாடி, பல பாஷைகளிலும் காலட்சேபம் செய்து, பெரும் சிறப்புக்களுடன் திரும்பி வந்திருக்கிறார். தென்னாட்டில் சங்கீதக் கலை எவ்வளவு முன்னேற்றம் அடைந்திருக்கிறது என்பதை அவர் மூலமாகவே வடநாட்டார் தெரிந்துகொண்டார்கள்.

ஸ்ரீமதி ஸரஸ்வதிபாய் அம்மாள் மூலம் தென்னாடு இவ்வளவு பெருமை பெறுவதற்கு முக்கிய காரணமானவர் அவருடைய குருவாகிய ஸ்ரீ கிருஷ்ணாச்சார் அவர்கள் என்பதை நாம் மறந்து விடக்கூடாது. ஸ்ரீ கிருஷ்ணாச்சாருக்குத் தென்னிந்தியாவே கடமைப்பட்டிருக்கிறதென்று சொல்லவேண்டும்.

The Future of the Harikatha Movement.

BY

Dewan Bahadur K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI, B.A., B.L.

The Harikatha Art is one of the greatest discoveries of the Hindu genius. In it are blended speech and song—the two supreme gifts by which man has risen above the lower orders of creation and reached equality with the gods. Dandin says in his *Kavyalankara* that all the three worlds become blind and dark and devoid of meaning and value if the light of speech does not light up the universe.

इदमन्धं तमःकृत्स्नं जायेत भुवनत्रयम् ।
यदि शब्दाह्वयं ज्योतिरासंसारान्नदीप्यते ॥

The sap of thought blossoms in the flower of speech; but the flower of speech fulfils itself in the fruit of song. It is by speech that we enter the world of men but it is by song that we enter the realm of God. As Rabindranath Tagore says in his world famous *Gitanjali*: " I know Thou takest pleasure in my singing. I know that only as a singer I come before Thy presence. I touch by the far-spreading wing of my song Thy feet which I could never aspire to reach. Drunk with the joy of singing I forget myself and call Thee friend who art my Lord. Nay, there comes a time when song dedicated to God is no longer a mere instrument of self-expression but so fills the soul that it is not possible to disentangle the ecstasy of song and the ecstasy of God.

एकान्तिनो यस्य न किंचनार्थं
वांछन्ति ये वै भगवत्प्रपन्नाः ।
अत्यद्भुतं तच्चरितं सुमङ्गलं
गायन्त आनन्दसमुद्रमग्नाः ॥

The art is a universal art, though the west has outgrown it, or rather, lost it to-day. The bards and minstrels, to use the term in its true sense, were experts in speech and song and were specially found among the Celts and used to expound in sweet song and sublime words God's gracious deeds of mercy and Man's heroic deeds of service. But in course of time, the west prided itself upon its naturalism and killed the bard by putting asunder speech and song which God had put together. Nay, it made Poetry a lisping counter or a decorator of the drawing room, and eventually, after the kings became dummies or were dis-

crowned and ladies left the drawing-room for the factory, the west made Poetry sing the dirge of happiness dead among the mad modern rush of life. At the same time, the west took music away from Divinity except in the case of choir music in churches (which themselves were getting emptier and emptier day after day) and either completely secularised it or made it a mere dance accompaniment. A student of modern life and literature feels as if Gray and Scott wrote the epitaph of the bards. In his famous Pindaric Ode entitled *The Bard*, he makes the Bard apostrophise King Edward I in words which fully apply to the secular and industrialised and militaristic modern civilisation.

" Ruin seize thee, ruthless King!
Confusion on thy banners wait;
Though fanned by conquest's crimson wing
They mock the air with idle state.
Helm, nor hauberk's twisted mail,
Nor e'en thy virtues, Tyrant, shall avail
To save thy secret soul from nightly fears,
From Cambria's curse, from Cambria's tears !".

The haggard woebegone looks of the poet are thus described by Gray.

" On a rock, whose haughty brow
Frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood,
Robed in the sable garb of woe
With haggard eyes the Poet stood;
(Loose his beard and hoary hair
Stream'd like a meteor to the troubled air,)
And with a master's hand and propher's fire
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre ".

What is the bard's doom ?

" Enough for me; with joy I see
The different dooms our fates assign;
Be thine despair and sceptred care,
To triumph and to die are mine.

—He spoke, and head long from the mountain's height
Deep in the roaring tide he plunged to endless night"

In the *Lay of the Last Minstrel,* Scott makes the minstrel mourn thus:

"The way was long, the wind was cold,
The minstrel was infirm and old:
His withered cheek and tresses gray
Seemed to have known a better day.
The harp his sole remaining joy
Was carried by an orphan boy
The last of all the Bards was he,
Who sung of border chivalry.
For, welladay! their date was fled,
His tuneful brethren all were dead;
And he, neglected and opprest,
Wis'd to be with them and at rest.
No more on prouncing palfrey borne
He caroll'd light, as lark at morn;
No longer courted and caressed,
High placed in hall, a welcome guest,
He pour'd to lord and lady gay,
The unpremeditated lay.
Old times were changed, old manners gone;
A stranger filled the Stuarts' throne;
The bigots of the iron time
Had called his harmless art a crime.
A wandering Harper, scorned and poor,
He begged his bread from door to door,
And tuned to please a peasants' ear,
The harp, a king had loved to hear".

Is such the fate of the Harikatha in India? Have deep sorrows overtaken the lyre and the harp? Have the tuneful brethren disappeared? Do the bigots of the iron age call the harmless art a crime? Are the survivors, driven from pillar to post by the harmonium and the gramaphone and the cinema and the radio, fleeing away from the so-called modern enlightenment? Are they using their harp, which once a king had loved to hear, to procure for them a precarious subsistence by begging their bread from door to door and tuning the harp to please a peasant's ear? Is it likely that even the peasant, seduced by the blandishments of the Cinema and the radio will not lend his ear to the wandering harper, scorned and poor?

No, No. A better fate will be the fate of the bard and minstrel in India. India's spirituality has fed and nursed the unpremediated lay with its charm of blended speech and song in India. The Gangetic flood of spirituality flowing from the feet of the Lord has unabated swiftness and undiminished sweetness yet; and hence the Harikatha, though temporarily a little out of favour, will come into its own again. Who was and is and shall be the brightest star in the Harikatha firmament? It is Narada—that musician among saints and that saint among musicians. It is Narada whose divine touch made the *Ramayana* and later yet the *Bhagavata* bloom for ever and scatter abroad the divine perfumes of Compassion and Devotion. It is Narada whose *Svararnava* or Ocean of sound flowed into the heart of Tyagaraja and overflowed it and scattered itself into a thousand streams of hymns and songs.

Let me linger awhile on the life of this ancient and eternal Bard and minstrel, this master who was both Harikathaka and Harigayaka. In the Bhagavata, we read the beautiful story of the gloom that settled on the soul of Vyasa—the author of the eighteen Puranas and the Mahabharata and the Brahma Sutras. Vyasa felt that his life was wasted and purposeless. Narada went to him and cheered him by narrating his own life in his pre-Narada and post—Narada stages. In the pre-Narada stage he was a young orphan boy who was taught by some saints to meditate on God. His meditation resulted one day in a flash of divine vision in his heart when he was immersed in the deep delight of contemplation. Let him describe his experience himself:—

आत्मनात्मानमात्मस्थं यथाश्रुतमचिन्तयं ।
ध्यायतश्चरणाम्भोजं भावनिर्जितचेतसा ॥
औत्कण्ठ्याश्रुकणाक्षस्य हृद्यासीन्मेशनैर्हरिः ।
प्रेमातिभर निर्भिन्न पुलकांगोऽतिनिर्वृतः ।
आनन्दसंप्लवेलीनो नापश्यमुभयं मुने ॥

His mind was overcome by spiritual emotion and tears of joy poured from his eyes, and his hair stood on end in ecstasy. In that tense state God shone in light in the dark chamber of his heart. He was immersed and drowned in beatitude and could not distinguish the soul from the oversoul. Then he heard a divine voice telling him that he must live in the light of that vision, as another realisation would not come to him and that if he lived pure and served all beings and scattered the bliss of his experience, far and wide, with praying lips and grateful heart he would become a perfect servant of God in his next birth.

नामान्यनन्तस्य हतत्रपः पठन्
गुह्यानि भद्राणि कृतानि च स्मरन् ।
गां पर्यटन् तुष्टमना गतस्पृहः
कालं प्रतीक्षन् विमदो विमत्सरः ॥

In his next birth he became Narada who playing on his divine Vina and singing the glory of God dowered all beings in this unhappy world with infinite and eternal bliss.

देवदत्तामिमां वीणां स्वरब्रह्मविभूषितां
मूर्छयित्वा हरिकथां गायमानश्चराम्यहम् ।
प्रगायतः स्ववीर्याणि तीर्थपादः प्रियश्रवाः
आहूतइव मे शीघ्रं दर्शनं याति चेतसि ।
अहो देवर्षिर्धन्योऽयं यत्कीर्तिं शार्ङ्गधन्वनः
गायन् माद्यन्निदं तन्त्र्या रमयत्यातुरं जगत् ।

In the above passage, we have a perfect description of the Art of Hari-katha. The artist should sing the glories and mercies of the Lord and speed on his mission of light and love and joy. His song must feed his emotion; and his emotion must feed his song. His song and his feeling must fetter the Lord in his heart. Devotion must radiate from him. He must be filled with bliss and must communicate bliss to the joyless earth.

It was at the instance of such a master that the Ramayana was born. The Ramayana must therefore be regarded as a blend of song and speech and must be sung. The Ramayana says that Kusa and Lava sang it sweetly and in accordance with the science of music.

Similarly the Bhagavad Gita and the Bhagavata also must be sung. But now unfortunately the secret of minstrelsy has been largely lost even in India and we get often funeral prosaic readings and renderings of our supreme epics.

The age of musical raconteurs never fully died out in India. The great Chand sang the Rajput military exploits and he was but one of the many bards in India. But the military glory of India set soon enough. Even then the sun of

spiritual splendour never set at any time. Nay, it shone all the brighter. The *Gita Govinda* of Jayadeva was a supreme achievement. In his case his speech and song won the crowning embellishment of his noble wife Padmavati's dance.

Though poetry and music attained separate excellence in India, yet the blended excellence of both also continued to exist. It was this tradition that vitalised the Maharashtra Harikatha movement when the Maharatas reachieved India's political self-expression and later yet the Harikatha movement in Tamil Nad and Andhra Desa and elsewhere as described in this volume.

In South India it was the great Krishna Bhagavatar that embellished the art with new and original features and made it a perfect blend of speech and song and devotion and a harmonious combination of humour and pathos and love and spiritual passion. Panchapagesa Bhagavatar added yet new graces to the art and made it a powerful means of Hindu consolidation and sublimation. When I was young I heard the soul stirring Harikatha performances of a blind bard named Andami Bhagavatar. The whole of India was deluged with the nector of *Prem* by such raconteurs. It is amidst such a galaxy that we must place and appreciate the great Harikatha artist Srimati Saraswati Bai as a star of the first magnitude in the Harikatha firmament.

But what is the present state of the art? It has fallen from its high state. It no longer occupies its premier position in the public eye. It does not attract bumper houses. " Another race hath been and other palms are won." The Cinema houses are full. The radio fans are fluttering everywhere. Has Cleopatra been withered by age and has custom staled her infinite variety? Has music of the Harikatha variety no longer any charms to soothe the public breast? Must the Harikatha artists break their magic words like Prospero? Must they say like him:—

" I'll break my staff, bury it certain fathoms in the earth, and deeper than did ever plummet sound I'll drown my book "?

I quite realise that the age of faith is on the wane all over the world. We hear its "melancholy long withdrawing war." I know that the Soviet slogan is that religion is an opiate to the people. I know also that this is an age of science. I know equally well that Democracy gives extensiveness at the cost of intensiveness. I know also that the counter attractions of the Cinema and the Radio are fresh and new and have the charm of a glamorous complexion and a youthful bust. But I have no doubt that with a little readjustment and a slight rejuvenatian the

Harikatha Art will come into its own again and be in the van of all of our arts. The fact is that the Harikatha artists to-day know little religion and less philosophy and ladle out second-rate music and stale jests and silly and twice told humorous stories (upakathas). They know little of the literatures in the regional tongues and even less of the literature in the divine classical tongue of India. More than anything else they have no living faith; and words that do not come from the heart will never reach the heart. Their moral standards are low. They have no plain living and high thinking; on the other hand, they have high living and plain thinking. There is more glitter in their lace garments and gold ornaments than in their speech or song. Let them but get rid of these defects and catch the Narada spirit once again, and I assure them that it can be said of their art.

"Tomorrow it repairs the golden flood and warms the nations with redoubled ray"

THE USE OF MIRACLES IN KALAKSHEPAM

BY

SRI. M. S. RAMASWAMI AIYAR, B,A., B.L., L.T.

The question may be fully stated thus:—How far the introduction of the element of *Miracles* into a story can be justified.

The imperious Brahmin of Adanur would not permit his slave, Nanda, to go to Chidambaram, until he was brought face to face with a 'miracle' whereby his lands, which had been negligently allowed to remain fallow, became—during the course of a few hours of a particular night—suddenly filled with full-grown paddy-grains. Again, the hot-headed Sultan of Hyderabad would not set his Tasildar, Rama Das, at liberty, until the 'miracle' of the midnight-visit of Sri Rama before him and the payment, by that divine Raghava of the 'mis-appropriated' money happened.

Are such *Miracles* necessary for teaching mankind morality ?

The *anti*-miracle party argues that the miracles, as such, are unnatural, improbable, imaginary, and even grotesque ; that they are devoid of any kind of human interest ; that they are not suitable or necessary agencies for the propagation of morality ; and that, therefore, they should be avoided in the story-telling.

The *pro*-miracle party, on the other hand, contends that the modern science destroys the imagination of its votaries but gives them nothing in exchange ; that it shuts its eyes to the fact that life itself is a paradox and, as such,

cannot be regulated by square and compass ; that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in all philosophy ; and that one may philosophise and closely question with regard to the origin of the miracles ; but there it is that the age-long superstitious belief takes a strong hold in men's minds and that such men will ever delight in the employment of the miracle-element.

Apart from the tug between these two parties, the miracle-element, on close observation, seems to exert a powerful influence over all average men and women, whom superstition controls. Look, for instance, at the young girl of 20 years old, Mrs. Siddons, who was to have acted the part of lady Macbeth. Gripped by the horror of the character and its supernatural connection, she fled away from the room and exclaimed ; "As I went upstairs, the rustling of my silk-dress seemed to me as more like the movement of a spectre pursuing me." Look, again, at the *Narasimhopasana* people who (on the breaking of a pillar and the appearance of Narasimha therefrom, in a stage) lose their equilibrium, get inspired, dance, and dash to crush the demon of Hiranyakasipu and who, on getting back their consciousness, proceed to apologise to their injured friend, who well acted the part of the demon.

From this superstition, even persons of superior intellect, well-read scholars, expert logicians, and keen observers of life and manners were not exempt; and, as Macaulay said, such persons seemed to have entered, even the House of Commons, with messages from God.

Dr. Johnson, incredulous on all other matters, was a ready believer in miracles and apparitions. He would not believe in the earthquake of Lisbon ; but he was willing to believe in the Cock-Lane Ghost

Shakespeare rightly realised the situation of his times and made proper use of the miracles by rationalising the operations of the Destiny. With them he prophesied Richard III's doom and Richmond's victory ; and again with them, he revealed the past to Hamlet and the future to Macbeth.

Nor did our own poet, Sri Harsha, fail to realise the situation of his own times as well as to make equally proper use of the miracles, in as much as he introduced Gowri, at the end of his *Nagananda*, and enabled Her to transform the tragedy into a comedy, which ever fits in with the Indian mind.

So long, therefore, as the superstitions connected with birth, death, weather, comets, birds, plants, animals and mark ! *Omens*, persist to exist and so long as the so-called Juggler's tricks remain unexplained ; the miracle-element will, despite your science, ever have a grip in men's minds.

HARIKATHA AND SARASWATI BAI

BY

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It may be said without fear of contradiction that Harikatha is not the indigenous art of the Eastern part of South India. It has been imported from Western India where it was greatly developed during the period of the great Saints of the Maharashtra community and attained its height of glory in Poona and Pandharpur. It followed the advent of the Mahrattas in Tanjore and was assimilated by the Tamil people. As a potent instrument for the exposition of the principles of true Bhakti and for the dissemination of the great stories of the Heroes and Saints of India's past among all classes of people, learned and illiterate, it stands unrivalled and has been powerfully aided by the enthralling power of music and devotional song. In the hands of the exponents of the Art it has gathered into a harmonious combination the elements and pieces of the poetic compositions in all the languages of South India and the setting of the main theme is generally in the Mahratti language.

One of the greatest exponents of Harikatha was Krishna Bhagavathar of Tanjore and he it was that added to the beauty of the performance the aesthetic effect of Bharata Natya. While it may be said generally that, in respect of the inculcation of the emotion of Bhakti, the art has degenerated in recent times, it has maintained its high level in the matter of the exhibition of talent in Music as well as in Humour.

The Harikatha is a combination of the many Rasas known to Indian Alankarika literature woven round the central Rasa of Bhakti ; and it is indeed a very difficult art to practise. To have developed that art to such great heights of excellence and have commanded the approbation of all discering critics is really a very great thing achieved by Srimati C. Saraswati Bai, whom it has been my privilege to have known from her younger days, when her latent aptitudes were discovered and her fine voice and powers of singing were being brought to shape. The richness of her voice, the beauty and the melody of her songs, her great talents in the technique of both Carnatic and Hindustani music and her marvellous powers of exposition of Bhakti Rasa in the many stories of our ancient heroes and saints are unique. For nearly 30 years, she has been practising the art and has commanded the appreciation and admiration of huge audiences in India, Ceylon, and Burma. She is now one of the greatest exponents of the Art of Harikatha.

Swaram-singing and its Place in a Musical Performance.

BY

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All true lovers of Souh Indian music who have closely followed the musical performances during the last four decades will, I am sure, agree with me in thinking that the singing of swarams by Vidwans in the course of rendering a song has been indulged in more as an end in itself than as an occasional embellishment enhancing the raga-bhava. I now propose to trace its origin and growth with a view to giving it its proper place in a musical performance.

During the time of Maha Vaidyanatha Aiyar and Patnam Subramanya Iyer, the two marvellous celebrities of S. I. music in the latter half of the last century, the singing of swarams was restricted to Pallavi. No doubt Maha Vaidyanatha Aiyar used to resort to it occasionally and do it in his own inimitably sweet manner, using only Sarva-laghu swarams. Patnam Subramanya Iyer, his worthy rival, however, used to sing swarams only in Pallavi. His great knowledge of Thala-Vinyasa he would then display in a remarkable manner, swaram and thala in holy wedlock bound. He would of course sing chitta swarams, if any, in the course of rendering a song.

But, later on, one or two Vidwans took to it out of sheer necessity. A musician who could not express all his ideas for want of a good voice and one who could not do justice to a raga in his improvisation of it had recourse to it and tickled the ear of the audience with his mystifying Swara-gymnastics. It became meat and drink to them. It is indeed a pity that what was a necessity with one or two well-known musicians came to be considered a mark of fashion by other rising musicians. A wrong idea also took possession of the minds of the audience that the merit of a Vidwan should be judged by the quantity of swarams he was able to sing in a performance. So Vidwans took to it with avidity. A strong incentive to this tendency was given by the organisers of concerts who arranged for performances by more than half a dozen artists. The kanjeera, dolak, moorsing, konogulu were called into requisition. The greater the number of percussion instruments on the platform, the greater was the fascination for the performance. Naturally the stock-in-trade of the musican

was a labyrinthine series of swaram-gymnastics which would rouse the emotions of the audience to the highest extent, the applause fiend taking possession of the house.

So the result has been that the Vidwans of to-day indulge in singing swarams in the course of rendering every Kirtana. The contagion spread even to the performers of Hari Kathas, where it is entirely out of place.

A word about the method of swaram-singing before I conclude. The time-honoured Sarva-laghu plan which never tires an audience has been giving way to what I call the Nattuva method of swara jatis in imitation of the drummer. I cannot help mentioning now a pleasant incident that took place at a musical performance at Kumbakonam about thirty-five years ago. I attended a performance on the flute by the famous Sarabha Sastriar. He played the Kirtanam "Enthuku Pethala" and began to play swarams in Anupallavi. By his side was sitting Mr. Narayanaswami Iyer, the veteran swaram-singer of Tiruvisanellore. He also took part in the performance and sang swarams. It was a beautiful combination and the audience had an intellectual treat for more than an hour. There was pin-drop silence throughout. What was it due to?. It was evidently due to the sarva-laghu swarams full of raga-bhava. I am now reminded of Sri Subbarama Aiyar of Mazhavarandal. It is high time that Vidwans realise that Thala-Vinyasa at the expense of raga-bhava is nothing but mutilation of music. They should not forget that the soul of S. I. music is its raga-bhava.

I conclude this short article with a suggestion that the custom of singing swarams in the course of a song may with advantage be given up. It may, however, be resorted to in a small measure while rendering Kirthanas in rare ragas which will also educate the audience. Ample justice to swaram-singing can be done by a Vidwan in his pallavi. Indeed the greatness of an artist can really be seen from the manner in which he handles ragam and pallavi.

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